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UNITED STATES POLICY OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NICARAGUA AND AID TO THE CONTRAS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

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UNITED STATES POLICY OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NICARAGUA AND AID TO THE CONTRAS

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1987

U.S. Senate,
Committee on Foreign Relations,
Washington, DC.

The committee met at 10 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Claiborne Pell (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Pell, Sarbanes, Zorinsky, Cranston, Dodd, Kerry, Simon, Sanford, Helms, Boschwitz, Pressler, Murkowski, Trible, and Evans.

Senator Zorinsky [presiding]. The hearing on U.S. policy toward Nicaragua will come to order.

On behalf of Chairman Claiborne Pell, I welcome you to the hearing on U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. Senator Pell had a commitment this morning, but he will be here a little bit later. He asked me to take the Chair in order to get the proceedings underway.

The Nicaragua issue is once again before us as the Congress, reflecting the concerns of the American people, prepares to deal with the administration's proposals for continued support, at increased levels, for the Contras.

The debate has raged for 5 years now, with concern deepening as the administration's military commitment to the Contras tightens and the prospects for peace through the Contadora process faintly flickers, despite renewed efforts on the part of the Contadora group, the support group, and the Secretaries General of the U.N. and the OAS.

The Congress is searching for alternatives and among those proposed is S. 184, a bill introduced by Senators Dodd and Weicker. I look forward to hearing my esteemed colleagues discuss their ideas on how to deal with the issues before us.

Following our questioning of the Senators, we will hear from authoritative witnesses assembled to help us consider Nicaragua policy, including Ambassador Sol Linowitz, the cochair of the Inter-American Dialogue and well-remembered for his negotiating skills.

After our questioning of Ambassador Linowitz, Prof. Kenneth Sharpe of Swarthmore College, a recent coeditor of a book entitled "Confronting Revolution: Security Through Diplomacy in Central America," and Col. Sam Dickens, the director for Inter-American

Affairs of the American Security Council Foundation, who has delved into the Nicaragua issue, will appear together.

Gen. Robert Schweitzer, the former chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board, will then give us the benefit of his expertise.

The administration will appear on the second day of these hearings.

With that, I would like to call on Senator Dodd and welcome you and Senator Weicker this morning. I am looking forward to hearing your statements.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, A U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator Dodd. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me express my gratitude to Senator Pell for holding these hearings as expeditiously as he has in the committee. I talked to him last evening and he expressed to me his regrets about not being able to be here first thing this morning. I am also grateful to you, Ed, for your help in this regard, going back several weeks ago.

S. 184 is a bill that Senator Weicker and I introduced on the opening day of the 100th Congress. This bill is designed to focus attention on and provide an alternative to current U.S. policy toward Central America in general and toward Nicaragua in particular.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unamimous consent that my text of my remarks be included in the record in full, and I will try to abbreviate them.

Senator Zorinsky. Without objection.

Senator Dodd. At the core of the administration's policy, Mr. Chairman, is a determination to finance a guerrilla army for the purposes of overthrowing the Sandinista government in Managua.

Mr. Chairman, having just returned a few weeks ago from a 23-day visit to Mexico and five Central American countries, I am more convinced than ever that the military option being pursued in Central America serves neither our interests nor those of the region as a whole. The long and the short of it is this, Mr. Chairman: It was a flawed policy in the spring of 1981 and it is a flawed policy in the winter of 1987.

By any reasonable standard, success has repeatedly eluded the administration's policy in Central America in dealing with President Ortega in Nicaragua and his fellow commandantes.

In January 1987, is there anyone who doubts that the Sandinistas' political, military, and economic ties to Moscow and Havana are stronger than they were in January 1981?

In January 1987, is there anyone who doubts that there are more Cuban, Soviet, and Soviet bloc advisers, both military and civilian, in Nicaragua than there were when Ronald Reagan took office 6 years ago.

In January 1987, is there anyone who doubts that the size of the Sandinista armed forces bears any relationship to the rag-tag militia that overthrew the Somoza dynasty?

In January 1987, is there anyone who doubts that there is less political freedom in Nicaragua, less press freedom, less religious freedom, than there was when this administration first came to town?

The conclusion, Mr. Chairman, is obvious. More of the same just will not do. More of the same will not prevent the existence of a Communist-run state in Nicaragua. I deplore that situation as much as anyone, but deploring the deplorable is no answer either. The real answer, I suspect, is this: For the foreseeable future there is precious little, short of direct U.S. military intervention, that we can do to change the political character of the Sandinista government.

Daniel Ortega, Tomas Borge, Luis Carrion—they are not about to change their ways of thinking simply because it displeases the Reagan administration, nor are they about to change their ways of thinking because of any threat of U.S. military operations against them. They may moderate their actions and their rhetoric, but the threat alone of military intervention will not cause the fundamental change inside Nicaragua that those who oppose the Sandinista government desire.

The reason for this is not terribly complex. The Ortegas, the Borges, and the Carrions of this world share in common one very important thing with those who support the Contra policy. They all vehemently believe in the righteousness of their own political cause. Moreover, keep in mind that the Sandinistas will never forget what we cannot seem to remember: U.S.-backed military forces have been no stranger in the land of Sandino.

So, Mr. Chairman, I am convinced that the Government of Nicaragua is not going to fundamentally change its political spots, at least in the short-to-medium term, there is too much historical and ideological baggage. At the same time, however, I am just as convinced that we can have a more significant impact on what the Sandinistas do and don't do if we stop waging war against them and begin treating them as we treat any number of other governments which have yet to earn our good housekeeping seal of approval.

In the meantime, Mr. Chairman, there is every reason to believe that the Sandinista leadership is prepared to sign the kind of agreement that would go a long way toward eliminating our immediate national security concerns in that troubled region. Such an agreement would bar the establishment of foreign military bases, Soviet or otherwise, in Nicaragua. It would provide for the removal of all foreign military advisers. It would place limitations on the size and force structures of the military organizations in each of the Central American states, including Nicaragua. It would prohibit support for guerrilla movements elsewhere in the region, and it would establish verification procedures in order to ensure compliance.

To underscore the significance of such an agreement, we should all bear in mind how much different, at least militarily, Cuba might look today if we had tried to negotiate rather than invade, as we did at the Bay of Pigs with another proxy army under the CIA direction. Had we successfully pursued a security arrangement with the Castro government, there might not be Soviet installations, Soviet forces, and sophisticated Soviet aircraft just 90 miles from our shores. And if the Cuban Government had violated such an agreement, we would have the force of international law and public opinon with us rather than against us.

My point is this, Mr. Chairman. Let's not make the same mistake in Nicaragua than we did in Cuba. Let's get the kind of agreement that was on the table in Manzanillo. Let's get the kind of agreement that is reflected in the Draft Contadora Agreement. Let's get the kind of agreement that the Government of Nicaragua has indicated it is willing to accept.

Mr. Chairman, we can get such a security agreement, and we can get it now. It may not add up to unconditional surrender on the part of the Sandinista government, but it certainly takes care of what I believe are the very legitimate security requirements of the folks who live in Harlington, TX.

Regrettably, this is not the direction of our current policy. We have to be honest about that policy. Our support for the Contras is the foreign policy version of the Edsel. We can continue to pump more dollars into the program; we can continue to tinker with the trim and the taillights; we can fiddle with the hood ornmanents; we can restyle the grill. But after we have done all of that, after we have had endless meetings, endless discussions, and endless debates, the reality is we have still got an Edsel and we have still got a loser.

It is a loser because in order for the Contras to survive, they must have outside support; namely ours. It is a loser because we mined the Nicaraguan harbors. It is a loser because we rejected the deliberations and the decisions of the World Court. It is a loser because we wrote and distributed terrorist manuals but called them something else. It is a loser because we imposed a unilateral trade embargo. And, yes, it is a loser because in an effort to sustain the policy, we made a deal with the Devil. We sold arms and ammunition to the Ayatollah.

Mr. Chairman, I am confident that this Congress will terminate assistance to the Contra forces. The only questions are how soon and in what manner. Will we prolong the agony? Will we contribute to more butchery and bloodletting? Will we wait until the Americal Division or "The Big Red One" have crossed the Rio Coco, or until the Marines have landed at Bluefields or Puerto Sandino? And in the end, will we wait for the inevitable scene, American officials scrambling aboard a helicopter as it prepares to lift off from an embassy rooftop, with local hires desperately clutching at the landing skids?

Had we faced up to these questions two decades ago in southeast Asia, that scene at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon would never have taken place, and a generation of Americans would not be left with the kind of political and social scar tissue that can never be erased.

No, we cannot go back, Mr. Chairman, and we cannot undo southeast Asia, but we can learn from that experience, providing we have the political will and the courage to do so. To evidence that will, that courage, a new legislative direction will be required.

Accordingly, Senator Weicker and I are proposing legislation that seeks to chart a different course for U.S. policy in Central America. The bill we are offering would, in the first place, authorize an additional $300 million in economic assistance in this fiscal year for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Clearly the Congress intended to provide this level of funding last year, but in the waning hours of the session, it was allowed to fall through the cracks.

Given our own economic circumstances, it will not be easy to come up with these funds. But the need for this assistance is urgent, and there is an outstanding commitment to provide it. If we are truly interested in bolstering democratic forces in Central America, we will deliver on that commitment.

The next point on the policy compass is the funding for the Contras, the funding that has allowed them to wage war against the people, if not the military forces, of Nicaragua. That funding must stop. No more funding for military training or funding for military equipment or funding for intelligence activities. No more funding for nonlethal assistance. No more funding directly or indirectly to supply the Contra war effort, period.

To reinforce this prohibition, our proposal also seeks to circumscribe other potential funding sources. Obviously, this administration, even in the absence of the colonel and the admiral, is not above exerting pressure on foreign governments to persuade them to maintain the Contra program. The temptation is particularly strong with respect to governments which receive economic or military assistance and/or participation in the Foreign Military Sales Program, whether on a cash or credit basis.

In order to remove this temptation, this legislation would bar economic or military assistance or military sales to any country which provides financial or military assistance to the Contra forces or to one of their front organizations. For any country participating in one or more of these programs, choosing between aid for the Contras and aid for itself should be a fairly easy decision.

Finally, the legislation we are offering would direct that the funds previously appropriated, but unexpended, for the Contras be used solely for the following purposes. First, these funds would be available to disband and relocate the Contra forces. Having been largely responsible for nurturing the growth and development of this guerrilla army, we simply cannot abandon it. We have a responsibility to facilitate the relocation and resettlement of these guerrilla fighters.

Second, these funds would be available to support the Contadora initiative or to help implement such an agreement. Diplomatic efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement to the Nicaraguan conflict deserves the full backing of the U.S. Government. To the extent financial assistance can help the diplomatic effort, we must make sure it is readily available.

Third, these funds would be available to support civilian democratic forces inside Nicaragua. These forces are alive in that wartorn country, but they are not well. They need all the help and assistance that we can provide. Indeed, if democracy has any future at all in Nicaragua, it will be because of the dissidents inside or in Managua, not the weekend warriors in Miami.

Mr. Chairman, we offer this legislation in the hope that from the rubble left by this administration's policy, we can generate a new beginning, a new beginning that will restore respect for the values and traditions of the Inter-American system which we helped to forge in the aftermath of the Second World War.

What the United States and the nations of Central America urgently need is a cooperative joint endeavor to reestablish those values and traditions and to build upon them. Compared to what this administration has been doing in the region, the time-tested values and traditions of the Western Hemisphere nations, whether viewed from San José, Guatemala City, or Washington, DC, look better and better every day.

In the final analysis, the great Mexican leader, Benito Juarez, probably said it best. And I quote him: He said, "Between men, as between nations, respect for the rights of others is peace."

In fashioning our policy toward Central America, we should take Juarez' advice to heart.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator **Zorinsky**. Senator Dodd, thank you very much for a well-founded statement.

Senator Weicker, prior to your statement, I would like to welcome our ranking member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, my good friend and colleague, Senator Helms, and ask Senator Helms if he would have an opening statement.

Senator **Helms**. I believe I will defer until Senator Weicker has made his statement.

Senator **Zorinsky**. Senator Weicker.

STATEMENT OF HON. LOWELL P. WEICKER, JR., A U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator **Weicker**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Senator Helms, Senator Simon.

Jesse, you and I can go back to our usual adversarial role now. [Laughter.]

First of all, I ask unanimous consent that my statement in its entirety be placed in the record.

Senator **Zorinsky**. Without objection, so ordered.

Senator **Weicker**. Last night, we listened to a State of the Union address by the President of the United States. Prior to that address, subsequent to it, both the political world and the people of the United States as a whole questioned the administration's actions vis-a-vis the current scandal involving both Iran and Contra aid.

I would like to point out at the outset, the matter, of course, of Iran is for the President to answer. But the other half of the equation, the matter of Contra aid, that is not just for the President to answer. That is for the Congress to answer and the American people to answer.

The matter of Contra aid has not been surreptitious. It has been out there on the table, a policy not only enunciated and effectuated by a President of the United States, but by a Congress of the United States.

The man I appear with today and the principal sponsor of this bill, Senator Dodd, long ago articulated the thoughts which he presents to this committee today. He is no newcomer. He is no climber on the bandwagon at the last minute.

But in order to demonstrate the bipartisan nature of the Contra policy, there is no better time than now to remind the committee that at the time Senator Dodd expressed his disapproval of the Contra policy and gave the Democratic response to the President of the United States on this issue, he was most severely criticized not by a Republican, but by the present Speaker of the House of Representatives, Jim Wright, speaking for many Democrats who had a hand in this policy.

So, when we ask the question, What are we to do about the Iran-Contra crisis, the answer should not come back: What is the President going to do; but, rather, what are we going to do as the legislative branch in this Nation.

The President may answer for Iran, but we have to answer as to a policy that has been a bad policy from its onset, as well-articulated by Senator Dodd.

A bizarre policy involves bizarre details. And for this Nation and for this Congress and for my Democratic friends to stand up there and say, "Oh, we didn't know that these types of things went on, as to laundered money, Swiss bank accounts, diverted funds." Nobody knew that a bizarre policy would involve bizarre details? When is it in the memory of anyone in this room and without, that the United States of America has tried to overthrow by force a government that we recognize? When have we done that?

We never have. And we are doing it now. And we are doing it now as a matter of law, because it has been sanctioned by the President and the Congress and the American people.

So, if indeed there is to be an end to the scandal which seems to bother the Nation, I would suggest that there be an end to the Contra policy. And to disavow the details is not enough.

It falls into what I call the "King Henry II scenario." Those that know their English history well remember how it was that King Henry in the presence of his knights, commenting on Sir Thomas Beckett said: "Will nobody rid me of this troublesome priest? And a few of his knights went out and did in the archbishop while he was at his devotions in the cathedral. And they came back and said, "We have taken care of the problem." And King Henry said, "I didn't mean that you should go ahead and kill him."

We did not know there was going to be laundered money. We did not know that there would be a diversion of funds. Indeed, in some instances, we were only talking about getting humanitarian aid when everybody in this committee and everybody in this town knows that even when that was the escape hatch for my Democratic friends in the House, nobody believed that there were going to be any humanitarian funds. Everybody knew it was another word for continuing this policy.

So, the time has come to face up to this problem as a Congress and not keep on pointing the finger just at the President.

Do you want to have a war over this issue? Why then shouldn't we have a declaration of war against Nicaragua? Does everybody want to face up to that? Let that be decided by this committee. According to the Constitution, that is what ought to be decided on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Oh, we don't want to do that; that will automatically commit our sons and daughters to conflict. That would mean taxes and resources out of our pockets.

That is the constitutional way it ought to be. And yet we do not follow the Constitution, and then we wonder why we get into problems when we try to run around the barn in a different way.

If we are going to have a foreign policy of armed conflict, then do it constitutionally. Or, in the alternative, if we are to have a policy of trying to keep communism out of the Western Hemisphere, then let's face up to what needs to be done there.

I find very offensive those that would imply—indeed I might say it was implied last night—those who support the Contra policy of the administration are against communism. Those who do not are something less than being against communism. I would suggest that there ought to be effective and active involvement by the United States, not just in Nicaragua but indeed all of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean if you want to keep communism out of our hemisphere.

What you are seeing in Nicaragua has already happened and it will be repeated time and time again until there is that kind of involvement, but running a few troops on the stage in the last moments of the play—that will not keep communism out. It is our involvement with the disease and the poverty and the malnutrition and the infrastructure of those nations which will keep commumism out.

And what goes on today, even in Cuba, is a total aberration of history, economics, politics, and whatever you will.

Well, our answer to all this is to shut ourselves out, rather than to involve ourselves. The knowledge that Senator Dodd has of Nicaragua far exceeds mine. I have never been there, but I have been to Cuba, and I would say my knowledge of that situation probably equates to his in Nicaragua.

And the shame is not the fact that the Communists are there, but that we are not there. So I make the point in the course of this debate that I refuse to accept as the field of battle those terms that the President lays down for those that support a Contra policy but, rather, that we use our commonsense and involve this great Government in the things that we do best and which that part of the world is looking for, and we eliminate the textbook causes for the entry of communism into Central America and the Caribbean and South America.

This legislation, I might add, I think does what needs to be done: It makes a clean break with the past. I would have gone one step further, I might add, than is contained in the legislation—which is to offer asylum to those Contras that wish to accept it. We are as much responsible for getting them into this mess as anybody else.

Why not follow the lead of the United States when both the President and the Congress approve it? We got them in there; we get them out of there. We do not throw them to the mercy of the forces that are the present Government of Nicaragua.

But I would hope that this legislation or something akin to it would pass and that we would start to have an intelligent policy on the part of the United States, a prodemocratic approach to the U.S. entry in that part of the world and not just some knee-jerk ancient reaction to the entry of communism.

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I would hope that there would be expeditious action on this legislation or something close to it, and that Democrat and Republican involve themselves; that there be no more finger pointing at the President. That aspect of our national problems today that we can handle, we should handle.

[The prepared statement of Senator Weicker may be found in the appendix.]

The **Chairman** [presiding]. I thank the Senators from Connecticut very much indeed. I apologize very much for not being here at the start of your testimony. I am very supportive of all that you said.

I understand that you made excellent opening statements and I look forward to reading them. I understand that the ranking minority member reserved his opening statement until you had spoken, so I now defer to Senator Helms.

Senator **Helms**. No indeed, Mr. Chairman. You have not made your opening statement yet.

The **Chairman**. I feel that I should be punished for being a little bit late, so you go ahead.

Senator **Helms**. You mean it would be punishment if you had to sit here and hear me?

The **Chairman**. No, but you should go first.

Senator **Helms**. I tell you what, Mr. Chairman. I was delayed about 5 minutes myself. One of the nice things about being in the Senate is that your adversaries are your friends and it is not difficult at all to agree to disagree agreeably.

And I say that as a preface because I want to ask a couple of questions.

You said, Senator Dodd, on page 6 that the President's efforts and the efforts of some of the rest of us to help the freedom fighters—you call them Contras, I call them freedom fighters—is sort of like an Edsel automobile. That is a very colorful paragraph here.

You said, "We've still got a loser. We've still got an Edsel."

Now, where were you in 1979? What was your occupation?

Senator **Dodd**. I was a Member of the House.

Senator **Helms**. And Senator Weicker was in the Senate. There was little matter of legislation to provide for the taxpayers of the United States to provide $150 million to the Communist Sandinistas.

Do you remember how you voted on that, Senator Dodd?

Senator **Dodd**. I don't know if it came up. I presume I would have supported it.

Senator **Helms**. You did. And so did Senator Weicker.

I wonder what kind of automobile that bought in Central America. Was it better than an Edsel? Was it worse than an Edsel?

Senator **Dodd**. Is that the question?

Senator **Helms**. Pardon?

Senator **Dodd**. Is that the question, Jesse?

Senator **Helms**. That is one of them.

Senator **Dodd**. The point is not whether or not the Nicaraguan Government is the ideal government. I would hope we could get beyond that point, because I think the debate is being framed as a choice between whether or not you like the Sandinistas or you like the Contras.

What I am suggesting to you here, what I gleaned during my visits down there—and talked with some others spending time on this—is that the Nicaraguan people find themselves between rather bad choices. It is not that the Sandinistas are—and I think I made that point as clear as I could in this statement and elsewhere—as a great alternative. In fact, I have seen the situation deteriorate over the last 5 to 6 years.

The question really is: Is the tactic, is the policy of pursuing the Contra approach, if you will, to resolving the Nicaragua difficulty the wisest course for us to be following? That seems to me to be the issue. And it seems to me that is what we have got to debate and decide.

I feel as though the situation has deteriorated. If you believed in 1979 that the Sandinistas were bad apples, then clearly I think you would have to agree with me that in 1987, as we begin this year, the situation in Nicaragua in 1987 is far worse than it was in 1979 or 1980.

Senator HELMS. Well, of course it is, Senator Dodd. And that is exactly the point. I cannot let you frame the issue from your standpoint. And you haven't answered my question: What kind of car did you buy with that $150 million?

I mean supporting a Communist movement. Now, let us lay it out like it is. Do not say that you were not warned. It is nothing to me. I am just an awkward country boy from North Carolina.

Senator DODD. Do you think I believe that or anyone else does?

Senator HELMS. But I knew, and said on the Senate floor, "Watch out." And it was common knowledge among people who were trying to know something about Central America.

Now, let me ask you this. Since the Communist Sandinistas came into power, how much money have the Sandinistas gotten from the Soviet bloc countries?

Senator DODD. I think that is anyone's guess. I would be hard pressed to come up with a dollar amount. They receive a lot of help, a lot of military assistance, a lot of technical support.

Senator HELMS. More than $2½ billion.

Senator DODD. I don't know. That is a number you have used in the past. I do not know how accurate that is. But I am not going to argue that it hasn't been a lot.

Senator HELMS. We will give you documentation for it. It is a matter of record. And it is probably more than that.

Mr. Chairman, I emphasize with all my conviction that these two guys are my friends. We do not agree on this, but I cannot let them get away with bashing Ronald Reagan, blaming America first, which is exactly what both of them have done in their statements.

I admire both of you, but there are two sides to this thing, and I think maybe one of the sides will emerge a little better than it has.

Senator DODD. I appreciate that. I want to say as well, my good friend from North Carolina and I have argued this issue now for 5 years I think in this committee at various stages, and we do happen to be personal friends. I know people find that hard to believe. We have actually done some things together legislatively on Latin America.

But let me just, if I can, say to my good friend from North Carolina, I do not bash my country at all. I think it is unfortunate that if we disagree about a tactic and how best we ought to advance the causes of our country and democracy and freedom, whether it be in this hemisphere or elsewhere, if we disagree with the particular policy that this administration follows—and, as Senator Weicker rightfully points out, there have been many Democrats who have supported the President on this policy, so it is not partisan even on that level—that somehow we don't love our country as much or have bashed our country or blame our country.

Senator HELMS. If you inferred that, Chris, forget it.

Senator DODD. I hope you would not, because I don't. I mean it is really a question of how best to advance the causes of our country.

Senator HELMS. I do not question your sincerity. I just say you are sincerely wrong. And you would say the same thing about me.

Senator DODD. That is right.

Senator HELMS. But I find myself wondering when it was that the Monroe Doctrine was withdrawn as the policy of the country. You know, little incidental things like that come to my mind when I hear all of this stuff about how crazy the President is and how much damage he is doing and all the rest of it. And I think we ought to be fair to those in the administration who have mistakes trying to offset some of the obstructionism that has been thrown in their path.

Now, Ronald Reagan was elected President and I was not, and neither of you were, but there are a lot of people across this country who fear the consequences of a Communist takeover of Central America. They already see what is happening in terms of the people pouring over our borders.

They worry about things like that and so do I. But I still respect you and I appreciate your coming, both of you, this morning.

Senator WEICKER. If I might comment for a few minutes to my good friend from North Carolina. As far as your not being President of the United States, Jesse, I took you as far as I could take you in making you ranking member of Foreign Relations.

Senator HELMS. I will be back 2 years from now.

Senator WEICKER. You know, where did all of this get started? I indicated to you on the instant moment, as far as this policy is concerned, no, the problem is not just the fault of the administration. I am as critical of the Congress as I am the President on this point. You support it; I do not.

But one thing I want to make clear, I am not going to allow the President to be the scapegoat on something that many people had a hand in.

Point No. 2. In a historical sense, where did it get started? It got started through Democratic and Republican administrations who did not give a damn about what went on in South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. And, Senator Helms, this is a textbook case—that part of the world, not just Nicaragua—as to where communism comes in.

It comes in where you have disease and poverty and misery in all of its forms. And we who have the capacity to do the most about it through Democratic and Republican administrations did nothing about it. And, sure enough, it came in various forms.

Now, the question is: In our generation, how do you combat it? It used to be that arms was a way, indeed at one time the only way.

But what I am saying to you is that the battle that we wage today is a far more sophisticated one, and it is that nation or that system of government or that ideology that can supply a quality of life that is going to be dominant in the people's minds of that particular nation.

The Cuban experience which I mentioned—and the pattern is very much the same—a Communist, Castro, succeeding a dictator, Batista. Certainly I do not advocate for 1 minute that anyone would want to live in Cuba today, but there are certain aspects of life in Cuba that are far superior for the people in Cuba than was the case when Batista ruled that country: education, health care, transportation, the basics of life. It is a joyless society and it is not one that any one of us would tolerate, and the opportunity is totally limited.

But instead of confronting that and trying to do something about it, we close ourselves off. Or, in the case of Nicaragua, we involve ourselves in a surrogate military way.

I think what Senator Dodd and I have both advocated over a period of time is not retreat, not withdrawal, not isolation, but a commitment by this country which will be far cheaper in the long run in the quality of life in our part of the world, in order that there would be no appeal to communism to come into our hemisphere. And there is where the disagreement lies. And I might add, different situations demand different responses and what is required in our part of the world is different from Poland, is different from Afghanistan, is different from the Soviet Union. Each place, rather than be monolithic in our approach, let us use our ingenuity as a nation to respond to the Communist threat.

The CHAIRMAN. I just, as a matter of record, would like my own position on this to be laid out front. I voted for that same aid to the Nicaraguan Government in 1979, feeling that it was a good investment at the time and that things would move along in the way that we hoped and expected; and that we were doing the right thing.

I think now that the military strategy that we are following is ill-conceived, ill-advised, and is headed for disastrous results. It is imperative that we redirect our policy toward exploring every political and diplomatic path available.

I would ask that the balance of my statement be inserted in the record as if read.

[The prepared statement of the Chairman may be found in the appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. I have just one question of the witnesses that concerns me because I share the President's opposition to terrorism. I cannot for the life of me figure out what the difference is between what the Contras are doing in Nicaragua and terrorists do in other parts of the world where they attempt, through indiscriminate acts of violence, to change the policy of a government.

To my mind, the Contras really should be referred to as "our terrorists."

What would be your reaction to that?

Senator WEICKER. I believe I used that term in my statement. I did, because there is no difference. And indeed, if there is to be a difference—I do not know if you were in the room when I made this comment—then let us really have it out on the table and let us have a declaration of war and let us debate it and let us debate it up or down. Fair enough.

But I know what we all want to achieve here. We want to achieve the same result without bothering our constituents. Well, I am sorry. When it comes to life and death in war, everybody better get bothered.

Senator Dodd. I think there have been acts that the Contras have been involved in that I think fall into the category of terrorist acts by definition, at least what we have used as a definition.

I would probably not go so far as to call it terrorist as such. I have spent a little bit of time with them. Some of these people don't look like they are old enough even to have been around in 1979. That does not necessarily exclude them from the possibility of being terrorists. But I would not necessarily want to put that label on myself.

The Chairman. I thank you very much indeed. I think we all recognize, Senator Dodd, that you are more plugged into that part of the world than any one of us because you were there prior to being a Senator, with the Peace Corps; you speak the language and you have been there frequently since.

Senator Helms. Mr. Chairman, let me abbreviate what would have been my opening statement. I will make a deal with my two friends here. I notice you have not mentioned anything about an election. Let's have a free election and see who are the people who are the terrorists in the minds of the Nicaraguans or the people who have been commiting terrorist acts.

It is a fact that the Communist government of Nicaragua did not keep any of its promises to the Organization of American States and succeeded in ripping off the American taxpayer in 1979 to the tune of $150 million. It was 7½ years ago that the Sandinistas took power by force in Nicaragua. It is now time that we call the Sandinista government what it is—a brutal Communist dictatorship.

Now, let's face it, gentlemen. Human rights are nonexistent in Nicaragua today and it is going to stay that way as long as the nine commandantes are in power.

Now, that is the reason I differ with you so strongly. The United States should not be cutting off aid. We should be increasing aid to those who are fighting for freedom. Nobody has suggested that any Americans go down there to fight. We need to allow the Nicaraguans to fight their own war and decide their own future. But we need to help them without moral and material support.

But I have not heard either one of you or anybody else in the meeting raise any questions about why there has been no election. I have not heard any comment about why they have not kept any of their promises regarding freedom? They know they will lose an election, and that is the reason they will not call one.

We should not be imposing further restrictions on helping the freedom fighters and we should not be trying to reach accommodation with the Sandinistas. We should, frankly, seek to remove them from power because it is clear what they are. We need to help the freedom fighters in their 7-year struggle to install a free government and to enjoy some of the same rights as we do in this country.

But I say this, Mr. Chairman, and I said it 7½ years ago in another context: that as long as the Marxist-Leninist regime is in power, it is going to be impossible for the Nicaraguan people to be free. And you can take money down there by the carload, the truckload, and you know what will happen to it.

That regime is an illegitimate regime and I believe it is time to ask ourselves if our goals are compatible with maintaining diplomatic relations with this regime. I do not think there is anything to be gained by even lending an air of legitimacy to this repressive regime. And I think if we were to withdraw any assistance to the Nicaraguans fighting for freedom there, we would be telling the world that it is wrong to struggle against communism.

I thank you.

The **Chairman**. Thank you, Senator Helms, for your opening statement. I notice we have four panelists coming up. There are quite a few Senators here. I am wondering if any of the Senators feel they want to ask a particular question.

Senator **Pressler**. Mr. Chairman, I do, just very briefly.

The **Chairman**. Senator Zorinsky would come first. Senator Zorinsky, I think we should limit ourselves to a maximum of 5 minutes.

Senator **Zorinsky**. Senator Pell, I would appeciate the opportunity to briefly set the record straight with regard to some of the items that my good friend and colleague, Senator Helms, has just referred to.

The reason I would like to answer one of his comments is that in 1979 I happened to be the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. And it was I who floor-managed the bill providing assistance to Nicaragua, and it was Senator Helms who was the opposing floor manager.

Inasmuch as I was one of those responsible for helping initiate the support for the Sandinista government at that time, I want to respond that to the best of my recollection on the Senate floor that day when we debated and finally approved the money for the Sandinista government, the amount of money was $75 million.

I also remember a majority of Republicans and a majority of Democrats supporting that vote. I also remember that an amendment to that legislation was adopted either on the House side or perhaps on the floor of the Senate, requiring 60 percent of that money to go through the private sector rather than the Sandinista government.

After the money was approved by the Congress, it is my recollection that President Carter stopped disbursements at the $60 million mark due to, as Senator Helms pointed out, some of the actions of the Nicaraguan Government that may have occurred at that time.

I was curious enough at that time to feel I ought to find out what happened to the $60 million that the Sandinistas did receive, most of which went through the private sector.

On my desk in room 443 of the Russell Senate Office Building right now sits about a 150-page document from AID, listing every dime of that $60 million and where it went. And every dime of it came back to American industry, businesses and companies for the purchase of nonmilitary equipment such as catsup bottlecaps, John

Deere tractor equipment—fertilizer, and seed. If I remember correctly, there was about a quarter of a million dollars' worth of chickens purchased and things of that nature, all nonmilitary in nature.

Also at that time, among the members of the Sandinista government that I remember were fellows named Arturo Cruz and Alphonso Robelo, who now we are giving a $100 million to as leaders of the Contras. Those people left the Sandinista government. I think the Nicaraguan Government was in better shape at that time, than it is now because all the good guys have left, leaving the guys with the guns and the Marxist elements in charge of the government.

But at the time of congressional approval of funds for the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, many of the same people we are supporting today as Contras were then called Sandinistas. So I just wanted to set the record straight, because that money approved by Congress was not for lethal weapons: handgrenades, shells, and bullets to kill the civilian population in Nicaragua. It went for things to reactivate the economy of Nicaragua as a nation. I can account for every dime, every nickel, and it was all documented by AID with the certificates of sale from the industries or companies.

I know a lot of people in our country who get paid for doing nothing. At least the Sandinistas gave all the money back to Americans to put them to work in our country to produce and manufacture nonmilitary items for them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Zorinsky.

Senator Helms.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get into a debate about the figures. Is there somebody from the State Department here who can tell us what the figures are? We got them from the State Department this morning. The total was $150 million appropriated, $119 million actually dispersed.

Is there anybody from the State Department who would take exception to those figures? They came from the State Department.

[No response.]

Senator ZORINSKY. Well, that is another reason to doubt their credibility. [Laughter.]

Senator HELMS. I do not doubt that. But I would like somebody to explain the discrepancy. If he got a figure of $60 million, where did you get it? You said you got it from the State Department.

Senator ZORINSKY. I got it from AID who actually dispersed the money.

Senator HELMS. Well, my figures came from AID.

Senator ZORINSKY. Well, I have got a signature and everything.

Senator HELMS. Maybe there are two fellows down there, your fellow and my fellow.

The CHAIRMAN. I think Senator Pressler had a question.

Senator PRESSLER. Yes. I just wanted to address a brief question to both of my colleagues and compliment them for their presentation.

Let me say to Senator Weicker that a week ago you were Senator Helms' greatest supporter. A political scientist will have to explain that one.

You once even campaigned for me, so I appreciate that very much.

Let me ask this. If we just assume that we could embrace the Nicaraguan Government or reverse our policies there, would it not be true that they would probably engage in exporting arms or engage in things such as occurred in Grenada, or try to expand into Costa Rica?

Can we just assume that if we just packed up our policy and went home, that they would just live peacefully and would not try expansionism? Is that your assumption?

Senator DODD. No, not at all. In fact, the legislation we are talking about here deals with the Contra issue, but to just suggest cutting off the Contra assistance and then leaving the situation status quo would be ludicrous.

The Contadora points, even though the process itself I don't think is in very good shape—and that is not my own personal assessment but rather the assessment of almost anyone you talk to in Latin America today—the 21 points of the Contadora proposal themselves are still very much alive.

The essential points, it seems to me from our standpoint, which the Nicaraguans at least state they are willing to support and sign onto deal with the security questions which it seems to me are paramount or should be paramount to ourselves. Those questions involve the presence of Cuban, Soviet, or Eastern bloc advisers and technicians inside Nicaragua.

According to the Contadora points, they would all go. They would leave. The Nicaraguan military forces would be substantially reduced. There is no set number in that, but nonetheless they have a very large army. To bring down the size of that military is something that would have to be agreed to.

Third, no sophisticated military hardware, no Soviet or Cuban bases. There is the real possibility that if we don't get some agreement in this regard, we could end up with Soviet naval bases on both the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts, raising serious security problems for the sealanes including the Panama Canal.

And last, that there be a policy of nonintervention in the neighboring governments, with a system of verification. Obviously, verification with regard to bases, technicians, and the like is relatively easy to achieve. Verification on support of guerrilla movements in neighboring countries is more difficult, but nonetheless not impossible to achieve.

It seems to me that if we are able to get those kinds of agreements with the Nicaraguans along with the other Central American countries, that is a major, major accomplishment in terms of our own interests and the interests of our allies in the region.

That is obviously something that I would like to see pursued far more rigorously than we have.

I do not suggest that we embrace the Nicaraguan Government. We come back to that problem over and over again. It is not a question of endorsing the Nicaraguan Government. The question for all of us in this room and in the Senate as a whole is whether or not the present policy helps us achieve our goals. Does it advance the cause of democracy, assist our neighbors in trying to provide some stability both politically and economically in that part of the world?

That ought to be the question; not whether or not we like the Nicaraguans or endorse the Sandinistas or agree with what they are doing. That has little or nothing to do with it. The question is whether or not our present policy advances our cause, our goals.

I would argue that it does just the opposite. In fact, the proof is if you look at Nicaragua in 1987 as opposed to 1981 if you will that the situation has dramatically deteriorated. Obviously something is not working.

Before we allow this to deteriorate further, we ought to change the policy.

I would add last, my great, great fear is that a decade from now, we will look back and we will find a stronger Cuban and Soviet presence in Nicaragua. We will find the sophisticated hardware. We will find even a more oppressive situation in that country, a real danger to our allies. We will look back to 1987 and wish that we had achieved the kind of national security agreement that I think is achievable.

If it is not, we have not exhausted our options, I would add further.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Hoping we can move it along, are there any more questions?

Senator SIMON. If I could just take 2 minutes, Mr. Chairman, and I am sorry my friend, Senator Helms, has left.

First of all, I applaud my colleagues from Connecticut for their statements. It seems to me that we have a situation where the Contras control not one single village in that area. If there is anything we should learn from Vietnam it is that if people don't support an effort, we can supply all the weapons we want, but we are not going to get anywhere.

When Senator Helms says we ought to increase aid for those who fight for freedom, if tomorrow the African National Congress were to ask for weapons, I would vote against it strongly as I differ with what is happening in South Africa. I do not like the Pinochet government. I differ with Senator Helms on that. But if the opposition were to ask for weapons, I would oppose it.

We had the President of Costa Rica here just 3 or 4 weeks ago, who stood up at the U.N., denounced the Sandinistas, but he said "What you are doing with sending weapons to the Contras, you are destabilizing this whole regime and threatening the democracies that are here. You are helping Marxism, not hurting Marxism."

Finally—and I think Senator Dodd touched on this very eloquently—the question is: Has our policy caused any movement away from Soviet influence in Nicaragua? It caused precisely the opposite.

So again, I commend our colleagues and I differ, with all due respect, with our colleague from North Carolina.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Simon. I am sorry we have to move along so quickly, but we have all these witnesses.

Senator Evans I think has a question.

Senator EVANS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is difficult, I know, with so many distinguished witnesses ahead of us, but first of all I could not let go—and I am sorry that the ranking member is not here—because I could not let go without challenge the devoutly-to-be-wished free elections that we would all like to see in Nicaragua.

I would like to see them in Chile as well. I would like to see them in South Korea. I would like to see them in Taiwan. We finally did get to the point where we had free elections or will have free elections in the Philippines. It took a revolution to produce it, but it was not a revolution backed by outside money or outside forces. It was a revolution of the people inside the Philippines who are finally fed up. The people, when they are finally fed up, can overturn virtually any government.

I proposed last year almost precisely the same direction that our two distinguished Senators from Connecticut now propose: That we spend our money and our time in economic development, in building economic and free enterprise showcases in the other countries of Central America.

I can think of nothing that would change attitudes and the potential in Nicaragua faster than to see all around them, countries with free systems of democracy, countries that are economic showplaces, countries that are making progress under a free system.

This is not just a war of bullets. It is a war of philosophy, of ideas, and nothing is more impressive than success. As I said, the people in the Philippines ultimately created their own internal revolution. I suggest that the same thing is most likely to happen in Nicaragua if they can look around them and see what happens under free systems of government.

I have one question of Senator Dodd. The bill would, among other things, make available funds that will be released to support civilian democratic forces in Nicaragua. While that would be a desirable end goal, do you think that it can practically be carried out? In other words, what would the reactions be of the current government in Nicaragua if it knew that certain organizations, groups, or forces in Nicaragua were receiving money, whether it is political party, press agencies, or other institutions of that sort?

Senator Dodd. What I was thinking about in that regard—and it is a very good question—has to do with things like conferences, gatherings, and international forums where they are now lacking resources to participate to bring into open discussion the present political situation in that country.

I did not intend by that language to get involved with some sort of covert operation of supporting those forces inside the country, but merely to assist them in trying to make their case about the absence of or the deteriorating situation inside their country regarding political opposition.

I would tell you they are remarkable people. For those of you who have not had an opportunity to talk with those elements inside Nicaragua who oppose the Sandinista government, it is worth your time. It would take nothing more than a weekend to go and to meet them. They are courageous, brave people who are desperately trying to improve the situation inside their country by remaining there.

It is worthwhile, if you go, to spend time with them, because it certainly does not fall on deaf ears or blind eyes inside the Nicaraguan Government. If you go there, you should insist that they be part of your agenda, and insist on talking to them. Those kinds of things can help.

Just one comment on your comment as well as Senator Simon's comment. Is there any doubt in any of our minds whatsoever that if we or others who have been supporting the Mujadine in Afghanistan were to stop tomorrow, is there any doubt in anyone's mind at all whether or not the Mujadine would continue to fight or not?

Yet, by the same token, when we are talking about the Contras, the suggestion is that if we stop supporting them tomorrow, they would stop and they would not continue. That is a fundamental difference here. And I don't think it is appreciated enough. If the cause is just, the logic is sound, it will persist. If it is not, it just doesn't. We cannot fund it and keep it going.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much indeed.

Senator Kerry.

Senator KERRY. I know you want to move on. Senator Cranston asked me to convey his gratitude and congratulations to both of you for your statements. He is delayed and cannot be here, but as a cosponsor of S. 184, he wanted to make certain that you understood that he appreciates what you have done.

I would just like to ask one very quick question.

During last year, as we debated the issue, we heard a lot of testimony from various people about the private conversations, about what people were hearing privately and what was being said by President so-and-so or Foreign Minister so-and-so.

I think you made a very important trip to Central America Senator Dodd. So I would just like to ask you, would you share with us whether or not, from your perception, you discovered a gap between the private and public statements? Were those statements consistent? And if they said anything to you privately, would you share it with us?

Senator DODD. Well, I would not want to violate confidences in terms of private conversations, and I had private conversations with each and every head of state: In the case of President Cerezo of Guatemala, about 4 or 5 hours; with President Duarte, 3 hours; with President Ortega, about 5 hours; and about 1 hour with President Azcona. All of those, with the exception of one, were private meetings, one on one, not with other people present.

My own view is that they believe that militarization of Central America would be the worst of all possible solutions and they fear that. They are also uneasy about the Nicaraguans. They have the most to lose in the shortest amount of time. They share common borders with that country and they are worried about it.

They would like to see a change inside that government. Clearly President Arias feels that. There are differences within each country in terms of their perspectives. But they believe that the best alternative, or at least the best alternative in the near term is through political and diplomatic efforts to try and achieve something along the Contadora lines. If not the Contadora nations themselves, possibly another vehicle could be chosen.

But the points of Contadora as they respect the national security questions are the ones they would like to see supported and endorsed. When it comes to the question of Contra aid—now that my friend Jesse has come back into the room—part of the problem you run into is this. When Senator Helms comes on down to visit and has private meetings, they know how Senator Helms feels about the issue and they are nervous about the Bilateral Assistance Programs, and so they have a tendency, I think, to maybe color their remarks in terms of a direct question.

When they see Senator Dodd coming down, they know how I feel about the issue, and they have a tendency there as well to color a little bit. So I don't know frankly, specifically, on the Contra question as to whether or not they categorically support or oppose. This much I do know; that is, they realize that if there is a continuation of the militarization of the region in Central America, they all lose. And they would like to see the problem resolved in that regard.

I should say to my good friend from Massachusetts as well that I have a report that we are preparing on this that will go into more detail on it. It is not a monolithic view, by the way. Each country there, there is a tendency for us to see Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Costa Rica as all sort of alike with exactly the same agenda. They are different. They are very different in some cases. They do not all necessarily get along together, by the way. They have their own bilateral difficulties historically, not just in the context speaking today.

So we need a bit more sophistication in looking at them than I think we have had in the past.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much indeed.

I think, Senator Murkowski, one question. And then I hope that winds it up.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to commend my colleagues for what I think is not only a fresh approach, but a redirection of efforts, recognizing that our previous efforts have not done what we had hoped that they would do, and that is to ease tension.

My concern, however, is whether there is going to be enough inducement if we pull out, stop our aid to the Contras; and simply give assistance to the other countries in Central America, if there is going to be any inducement for the Sandanistas to pursue of the Contadora process and make peace.

I had spent a little time over the holidays in Puerto Rico, and during that time I had an opportunity to meet with a number of people who have investments throughout Central America. They are very concerned about the role of the United States in withdrawing assistance from the Contras.

They seemed to express the feeling that capital will flee Central America if the U.S. presence is not maintained, because there will be no stability. And as a consequence of the movement of capital out, things will not get better; they will get worse because there will be more people out of jobs; there will be more unrest. This is just the scenario of a number of people who happen to be of Cuban descent, who have left Cuba, and resettled in Puerto Rico and now have many businesses and are trying to operate and create jobs. And it is certainly food for thought.

My question, gentlemen, concerns the historical viewpoint: Whether or not we feel that the fact that we were active participants in the effort in El Salvador 2 or 3 years ago, whether that was a good thing or was worth it.

Should we have abandoned President Duarte and allowed whatever was going to happen in El Salvador to happen? Or was our aid, our contribution crucial in stabilizing things so they could initiate an election there? Now, we can criticize how free that election was, but it was an election; people did stand in line to vote. Duarte, everybody has an opinion of him, but he is there and he appears to be a product of the choice of the people.

My concern, all due respect, is that if we accept your proposed legislation, which is designed to help the rest of Central America, (*a*) what inducement do we have indeed that the Contadora process will move forward and they will reach some kind of accord in that part of the world; and (*b*) is history not more likely to reflect more positively on the role that we previously played in El Salvador? As you pointed out, the two situations are not the same, but it is a similar part of the world and we have had a little experience there.

I would appreciate just a short comment. Was it a mistake in El Salvador to support Duarte against the Communist guerrillas?

Senator **Dodd**. No.

Senator **Murkowski**. How do you differentiate?

Senator **Dodd**. Well, they are different fact situations, but I would just tell you in my conversations with President Duarte and people like Vidas Casanova and General Blandor and others, I had a long lunch with the military people there. General Casanova said to me personally that had it not been for the legislation that we adopted back in 1981 or 1982 which conditioned military assistance on the human rights picture—he never thought he would say that, but today he does—that that made a significant difference in that country in terms of them coming to terms with their own internal problems.

Senator **Murkowski**. Because we were there and helped?

Senator **Dodd**. Sure. We didn't back away. You have to be there. But I think there were many who questioned the wisdom of that legislation, that we were somehow anti-Duarte. It was not at all, and I think that President Duarte said that on a number of occasions himself already.

He has difficulties there today, but clearly I think, as Senator Weicker has said, and I couldn't agree with him more, you have got to be involved. I hope nobody interprets what we are saying as somehow noninvolvement. In fact, that incorporates a deeper involvement; it is just the quality of involvement we are talking about.

Last, I would say to my good friend from Alaska with regard to investors, clearly Central America has been a troublesome place for investment and certainly the likelihood of expanded military conflict is what is apt to frighten off more people.

Let me tell you the great news. We talk about the bad news all the time. The great news is that of the five Central American countries, we have four relative democracies. I say "relative," because some are older and more secure than others, Costa Rica being the oldest, the most secure; Guatemala being one of the newest, if you will, given its history.

Never before in the 160-year history of the independence of these countries have we had four democratically elected presidents of

Central American countries sitting simultaneously. It is a remarkable historical occurrence.

President Arias and Cerezo are as eloquent on the subject of democracy as any two people I have ever listened to, in or out of this country that we live in. It is a deep-felt commitment. It is not something that they just talk about rhetorically.

Senator MURKOWSKI. It is the basis for the inducement of the Contadora process.

Senator DODD. They believe it can work. They believe it is worth an effort to try. Frank, I don't know whether or not it will work. Anyone who will tell you with any certainty what will work, I admire. But I question where the logic comes from.

All I am suggesting to you is why not make an effort? Why not see if we can't nail it down, take care of those security interests? I would love, like Jesse, to see the Sandinistas have a conversion on the road to Managua and change their viewpoints and become Jeffersonian Democrats. It is not going to happen. Short of overthrowing them, it is not going to happen. And if we made that the goal or the condition precedent, it seems to me we run the risk, as I mentioned a moment ago, of revisiting this issue 10 years from now and finding a situation that is much deteriorated.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Of course, you run that risk either way.

Senator DODD. That is true.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

With the acquiescence of my colleagues, we should move on.

I thank you, Senator Dodd.

Senator Boschwitz.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Mr. Chairman, I admit that I have not looked carefully at Senator Dodd's and Senator Weicker's new piece of legislation. And I will do that.

I agree with Senator Dodd. I think that our presence there has contributed to the fact that there are four, possibly five—if you want to include Belize—democracies in Central America, and this is the first time that that has occurred.

During the recess I had the opportunity to read a most interesting book, written by Shirley Christian, entitled "Nicaragua." She is a Pulitzer Prize winning reporter, I think who works for the New York Times. It was very difficult to discern whether or not she had a bias one way or another, and it gave a very good history and background of Nicaragua and also brought that history very much up to date because it is a very recent book.

Frankly, I have been a supporter and I expect to continue to be a supporter of the President's efforts in Central America. And I think, very frankly, that the situation has improved in that region. I do not subscribe to the idea that those policies have been a failure, and one of the factors that is indicative of that is what you said, Senator Dodd; that is, that there now are some democracies down there, not only Costa Rica which has a history of 110 or 120 years of democracy, but others as well.

And if you will look at the elections, particularly in Honduras, and at the way in which those democracies were created, one really has to admire the desire of the people there to develop and to adopt democratic institutions.

Not many years ago, I used to read on a daily basis the activities of the death squads in El Salvador and in Guatemala as well—40,000 or 50,000 people perhaps were killed in each 1 of those countries. I think one month death squads killed as many as 840 people.

Certainly those situations have improved and those death squads, which are both on the right and the left but principally of the right I believe, are no longer active in that region nor in Guatemala. And while there certainly is a level of violence, nevertheless I do not believe the level of violence is as great now in Central America as it has been, and I think that, too, is a reflection of our policy.

I agree with the President that I do not want to see a Communist dictatorship become rooted in Central America. I note that the Contras number 16,000, 18,000, 20,000 people and that Nicaragua is a small country on the other hand. It is about two-thirds the size of Minnesota, my State, has half as many people, Senator Dodd, as live in your State——

Senator DODD. No, about the same--3 million.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Pardon me?

Senator DODD. Three million. About the same.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Oh, I thought that Connecticut had more people than that. Well, half as many people as in Minnesota—2½ million people. There used to be 3 million people, Senator, but half a million people have left Nicaragua and have settled elsewhere, motivated by desire to get away from the Sandinistas.

It is a small country, with the Contras totaling about three-quarters of 1 percent of the people up in the hills opposing the government. That is not an insignificant number. If you compare it to the Philippines which is a country of 50 million people, there are fewer Communists up in the hills than there are Contras up in the hills of Nicaragua.

So, I think that we have made progress in Central America, and I think that we need a constancy of policy in Central America. So I am supportive of the President and I am very happy to talk to you about it at greater length, either presently or otherwise.

But I think that we have had some successes down there.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much indeed, Senator Boschwitz.

I guess my effort to have some people withhold questions will not succeed.

Are you seeking recognition?

Senator SANFORD. No, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Trible has a question.

Senator TRIBLE. To my colleagues from Connecticut, let me say that although we often disagree, I hold you in great esteem and I have great respect for your ability and I find you always thought-provoking.

I would like to ask you one question. The sense of what I hear you say is the Sandinistas do not have many redeeming qualities. You do not identify with their philosophy or their ways.

In my judgment at least, they represent a menace, not only to the people of Nicaragua, but also to the surrounding countries, but that our military policies in support of the Contras will not work, and therefore we ought to put that behind us and strengthen the fledgling democracies in Central America, and try to influence the Sandinistas to turn from their ways.

I think that is a fairly accurate statement of what I hear you saying.

My question is this: What makes you believe the Sandinistas will act any differently if we change our policies? What is it that will make them less repressive? What is it that will influence them not to support subversive activities in the region? Admittedly, the support of the Contras is an imperfect instrument of public policy, but it seems to me that perhaps it is the only leverage that we have, it is the only way that we can hope to change the internal policies of that country. And, absent that, we really have no influence.

It seems to me history suggests in compelling terms that Marxist governments do not change their ways; that they will continue their generally repressive policies; and that they will seek ways to encourage the revolution beyond its borders.

What is it you see that suggests to you that Sandinistas will conduct themselves differently, or should we simply accept the reality of the Sandinistas and live with it?

Senator WEICKER. First of all, I think Senator Dodd has stated very well that whatever it is you have as a policy now clearly is not working, and that is a policy of hiring mercenaries to overthrow the government. That is the policy.

It is not as if you don't have access to Nicaragua. We have diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. We have "normal relations." That is why this is such a bizarre policy. We have access.

Do you want to contest the Soviets and the Cubans, et cetera? Well, get in there and contest them. Now, the Sandinistas did not just occur gratuitously. They occurred because of the mistakes that we made in continually backing the Somoza regime and there is going to be a price to be paid, and we are paying part of that price now. But we will pay a far greater price if we don't do two things.

First we want to strengthen those regimes around Nicaragua. Second, we eliminate the possibility of dialog with Nicaragua or involvement with Nicaragua. As I stated before the committee assembled in full today, to leave Cuba to the Soviets, period, is just nonsensical. We ought to be in there contesting with the Soviets. But we are not, by our own choice.

I choose to do what we can in and without Nicaragua, and we can do a great deal, because whatever that support is in the Soviet Union now, it is an aberration. It will not last. It defies history. It defies economics. It defies geography. It will not last. But only if we are the alternative.

And right now the only alternative we are is as the paymaster, as the paymaster for mercenaries trying to overthrow a government that we recognize. That is not only bizarre; I find it just absolutely against everything that I was taught to believe insofar as our being a nation of laws.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank you very much.

Senator TRIBLE. Mr. Chairman, I would like very much to hear from Senator Dodd to respond to my point.

Senator DODD. Some have suggested that if the Contras did not exist, that the Sandinistas might have created them because it has actually worked, to some degree, to their favor in terms of international public opinion, and as an excuse to build up militarily, impose martial law, and the like.

I think you have to separate two sets of issues there, the internal questions and the external issues. The internal questions are things like freedom of religion, freedom of press, democratic institutions, and the like. The only way I see you are going to get any real change in the short term in Nicaragua on those issues is to overthrow the government.

I do not see any fundamental change through a process of dialog. They are not going to negotiate their own departure, put themselves out of existence. So the internal questions, as much as I find them upsetting that they don't do these things, I do not see any recourse to that, short of getting rid of them. That is, militarily overthrowing them and successfully getting rid of them.

The external questions having to do with the legitimate security issues that face our country which ought to be our primary concern and those of our allies, I think you can resolve. And that is through the Contadora process. That deals with the things I mentioned earlier: military bases, advisers, technicians, nonintervention policy, sophisticated hardware, and the like.

It seems to me that if the Nicaraguans are willing to sign such an agreement with ourselves and others in the region, it ought not to be a bilateral agreement. It is strictly between ourselves and Nicaraguans, but done regionally.

But then it seems to me you can address those fundamental questions which are pivotal, are very, very important, and are not to be disregarded. That I think you can achieve.

As far as the question of how I can guarantee that is concerned, I cannot. I know that the present Contra policy is not getting us anywhere and, in fact, giving the Nicaraguans an excuse to do some things that I don't think they need to be doing. And it runs the risk, obviously, of broadening the conflict militarily.

Obviously, what I am talking about requires good will and a determination to do it. We can legislate until we are blue in the face up here. Until the day arrives that the administration is willing to really try this. But at that point I think it is going to be very, very difficult, to say the least, to achieve it. If they were really committed to it and really tried it now, I think it could succeed.

Obviously what lingers in the back, and what the Sandinistas have to be conscious of, is if they sign such an agreement and violate it, the alternative, the military alternative, has not been removed and you have an entirely different complexion, it seems to me, under that set of circumstances. But we ought not to disregard those external questions that I think are very real.

As I said in my statement, it might have been possible 20-odd years ago to achieve such a similar agreement with Cuba, dealing with the military, the security questions.

Today, Soviet submarines land in Cuba and we talk about a Soviet brigade in Cuba. We talk about sophisticated MIG's in Cuba. That is 90 miles off our shore and 25 years ago we might have been able to achieve security arrangements where that kind of weaponry would not have been present right off our shores. I do not think we ought to miss that opportunity today.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Well, you know, we did try with Nicaragua. We extended quite a bit of aid, Senator. If you read some of the history of it—have you read Shirley Christian's book?

Senator DODD. I have run through it; yes.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. If you read some of the history of it, I think you are putting the cart before the horse. I mean these things that the Sandinistas have done are not because of the Contras.

Senator DODD. I did not suggest that they were. I think it has given a good excuse.

The CHAIRMAN. We really must bring this to a conclusion. I thank both you gentlemen very, very much for being with us. We congratulate them. We are fortunate in the Senate for the leadership you, Senator Dodd, exercise here as chairman of the Subcommittee on Latin America, and we are very glad you are.

You and Senator Weicker may care to join us for the next panel on the dais. We give you warm welcome if you would like to.

We now move to our next witness, Ambassador Linowitz. As you can see, time is passing, so I hope you could limit your excellent statement, that I have had a chance to go through, to 5 or 10 minutes, so there may be some time for brief questions afterward.

I would say in view of the number of people here, we must limit the questions to a 5-minute period.

STATEMENT OF HON. SOL M. LINOWITZ, COCHAIRMAN, INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Foreign Relations, I welcome this opportunity to be here in response to your invitation to testify on the challenging and troubling problem of Nicaragua.

As you may know, I have for many years been involved in United States-Latin American relations. Twenty years ago, I was the U.S. Ambassador to the Organization of American States under President Lyndon Johnson. I had the responsibility for organizing the hemispherewide Meeting of Presidents at Punta del Este, Uruguay in April 1967, a meeting which held out so much hope and promise for enhanced cooperation of the Americas.

Just 10 years ago this month, President Carter's first National Security Council meeting produced the decision to negotiate a new treaty with Panama, and I was privileged to join the late Ellsworth Bunker in bringing the new Panama Canal Treaties into being.

In both of these capacities I worked closely with this committee and I had a chance to see for myself and come to understand very well the vital role which the committee can play in providing perspective and wisdom on key foreign policy issues.

I also learned how much can be gained by working closely with our Latin American friends and neighbors to try to solve inter-American problems together, rather than try to go it alone.

During the past 5 years, I have been serving as cochairman, with President Galo Plaza of Ecuador, of the Inter-American Dialogue. The Dialogue, as some of you know, is a nongovernmental group of approximately 60 concerned leaders from throughout the hemisphere who come together periodically to discuss the most significant issues in inter-American relations. As you might suspect, Nicaragua has been a major issue in our discussions over the past several years.

My testimony today, of course, is purely personal, but it will reflect these discussions I have had with members of the Dialogue, as well as with other thoughtful citizens from around the Americas.

If one thing is clear, Mr. Chairman, it is that the United States needs and does not have a sustainable national policy toward Nicaragua. We need a policy that commands bipartisan support and will be supported long enough to have a chance to succeed.

But from almost any perspective, Nicaragua today stands as a disappointment of U.S. policy. Americans generally are concerned that a Marxist government has become entrenched on the mainland of North America. Many are also troubled by apparent U.S. violations of international law in seeking to oust the government of a tiny Central American country.

What is unmistakable and deeply disturbing is that United States policy toward Nicaragua has divided Congress and the American people more than any other foreign policy issue since the Panama Canal Treaty debates. Our policy has, moreover, distracted U.S. attention from other pressing hemispheric problems, particularly the economic and financial crisis that continues to threaten all Latin Americans and, in my judgment, Mr. Chairman, poses a greater threat to the security and the stability of the hemisphere than what is going on in Central America.

Our present policy has rekindled old suspicion about the United States among the nations of the region, and thus in itself has become a major obstacle to better United States-Latin American relations. It has also made our allies in Europe uncomfortable, and it threatens more conflict and possibly direct U.S. military intervention.

Let us start by recognizing some unpleasant facts. Nicaragua today is being governed by a revolutionary movement, many of whose leaders are Marxist-Leninists. The Sandinista regime is hostile to the United States and has forged close ties to the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Sandinistas have encouraged revolutionary change and supported insurgent movements in Central America.

The Sandinistas are not democrats. They have restricted civil liberties and violated human rights. Their prime commitment is to revolution and not to democratic pluralism.

These facts about Nicaragua must be faced. But we must also face another hard fact. The policy the United States has been pursuing is not effectively meeting the challenges posed by Nicaragua. Nicaragua in 1987 is surely not more democratic, conciliatory, respectful of its neighbors, or independent of the Soviet bloc than it was when the administration's policy was adopted. As a matter of fact, it is less so.

The approach we have taken in Nicaragua commands very little support either in Latin America or elsewhere in the world and, by its own admission, the administration's policy of supporting the Contras has resulted in a greater buildup of Sandinista strength and military force.

I submit that it is time, long past time, for us to ask ourselves frankly where we are going in Nicaragua and what we are seeking to achieve. Despite the emotional and divisive debate, there is, I believe, broad agreement in this country on what the central goals of United States policy toward Nicaragua should be: To assure that Nicaragua is not a threat to our national security or the security of its neighbors, that Nicaragua not be allowed to establish a Soviet or Cuban strategic base, or to introduce Soviet or Cuban forces onto its territory; that Nicaragua not promote guerrilla activity in Central America; and that democracy and human rights be supported in Nicaragua.

The debate on United States policy toward Nicaragua has fundamentally centered on how these objectives are to be achieved. Do they require that the Sandinista government be removed from power or can they be achieved through a negotiated settlement with the Sandinistas?

Must the United States rid itself of the Nicaraguan regime, or is it sufficient that we be credibly and verifiably assured that Nicaragua will not provide military advantages to the Soviet Union or Cuba, will not try to overthrow other regional governments, will not seek to export its revolution?

The administration's policy assumes that our objectives can be achieved only by the overthrow of the Sandinista government or by its surrender of power. With these goals in mind, it has embarked on a policy of support for the Contras, hoping that the Contras will be able either to topple the Sandinista regime or so weaken it as to cause it to give up its power at the negotiating table.

One important fact which the administration does not seem willing to face is now all too clear. There is very little possibility that the Contras will be able to defeat the Sandinistas militarily. If that is the case and if we remain committed to our position, this will ultimately mean a large and costly U.S. military operation.

Aside from its cost in human and material terms, such a move by the United States would grievously damage our relations with Latin America and imperil any hope of rebuilding a genuine and cooperative inter-American system.

Moreover, opinion polls indicate that a military operation in Nicaragua would be nearly as unpopular in this country as it would be in Latin America. It would certainly widen the rifts within Congress and within the country.

Now, an argument is advanced by the administration that without U.S. military and economic pressure, the Sandinistas would have no real incentive to enter negotiations. What troubles me and many others, however, in considering this approach is that such pressures, even if they once served a useful purpose, have now outlived their usefulness. Continuing them is far more likely to stiffen rather than weaken the resistance to the Sandinistas, to increase the influence of the hardest liners among them, and to push Nicaragua even closer to the Soviet Union and Cuba.

By maintaining this approach, we are ignoring the advice and the cooperative efforts of the Contadora countries and their supporters.

Moreover, while we talk about using military pressure to induce flexibility and compromise by the Sandinistas in negotiations, in practice we have not connected our support for the Contras to any strategy for negotiation. We have been pursuing a primarily military approach to what is essentially a political problem without enough force to win a military victory or enough strategy to develop a political solution.

Is there an alternative which will achieve our central goals and permit the United States to achieve and accomplish what President Reagan has repeatedly said we seek: "A political, not a military solution"?

I believe that a political solution is feasible and can become the basis for an effective and sustainable national policy with bipartisan agreement.

In the first place, we can all agree that our most urgent and vital objective is to assure that Cuba does not become a direct military threat to our security by becoming a platform of Soviet and Cuban power. The administration would surely have solid, broad bipartisan support for a clear statement, expressed publicly as well as in diplomatic channels, that the United States will do whatever is necessary to prevent the establishment of a Soviet or Cuban military base in Nicaragua.

We must leave no doubt that we would regard as an intolerable provocation the introduction into Nicaragua of strategic weapons, major offensive weapons systems, or Soviet bloc combat forces, and that we would use force if necessary to prevent such a contingency. The Soviet Union and Cuba recognize our strength and will respect a clear statement of our national resolve on this issue.

Second, to deter the Sandinistas from aggression against their neighbors, the United States should make clear that our troops stand ready to help repel any attack by Nicaragua against its neighbors. Once again, there should be no ambiguity or uncertainty about our commitment in that regard.

Third, to reduce the Sandinista arms buildup and to prevent cross-border support for insurgent movements, we should work closely with the Contadora nations in their attempts to develop verifiable and enforceable international agreements.

Now, the Contadora effort has thus far had disappointing results, but despite delays and problems it remains the only viable avenue for political settlement. It is the only game in town. The Contadora draft treaties go a long way toward specifying security arrangements that would contain the Sandinistas. They would reduce the size of the armed forces, limit future arms purchases, remove foreign military advisers, and ban logistic and material support for insurgent movements.

These provisions need to be made more precise and technical and the arrangements for detecting violations need to be fortified, with active help and support from the United States.

The Pentagon and others have argued that even if the Contadora Agreement were signed, Nicaragua would violate it and this could lead to a wider war. But the agreement would, as I have already indicated, specifically call for necessary surveillance and verification procedures to monitor compliance, and if Nicaragua violated the treaty signed, the United States would then be in a position to take steps to deal with the situation, with likely bipartisan support and far greater backing and understanding from the Latin American countries.

For its part, the United States has not said whether it would accept the Contadora Treaty and abide by its terms if Nicaragua does sign and honor it.

Clearly, the Contadora process cannot succeed if Washington insists on basic changes in the Sandinista regime as a condition for agreement on security matters.

In April of last year, Ambassador Philip Habib wrote to Congressman Jim Slattery, indicating that United States support for irregular and insurrectional forces would cease from the date of the signing of an acceptable security arrangement with Nicaragua. This statement, welcomed by the Contadora nations and elsewhere in Latin America, was promptly disavowed by the administration. It remains an approach which could have a significant effect in furthering the possibility of an agreement and reinvigorating the Contadora process.

There is no question but that our other important objective toward Nicaragua must be the promotion of democracy and human rights. But efforts to achieve a workable, regional security arrangement should not be held hostage to the accomplishment of internal political reform in Nicaragua.

The question is not whether to promote democracy in Nicaragua, but how to do it most effectively. Nicaragua has never been ruled democratically and it will not become a democracy from one day to the next. Nor can democracy be transplanted to Nicaragua from abroad. Democracy is an internal process that is rooted in each country's history, institutions and values, and in the balance of its economic and social forces.

Democracy has rarely, if ever, been imposed by outside armed force without extended military occupation. For democracy to take root in Nicaragua, it is critical that political alternatives to the ruling Sandinista movement be strengthened within that country. The way to such democratic openings could be greatly facilitated if the war ended and Soviet and Cuban personnel were withdrawn pursuant to the Contadora understanding.

How then can the prospects for democracy be advanced? First, the Contadora draft treaties provide formal commitments by Nicaragua and the other Central American nations to hold free, fair, and internationally observed elections; to provide constitutional guarantees for freedom of the press and assembly; to assure that all constitutional parties will be able to compete for office without intimidation or impediment.

These provisions must be strengthened so as to leave no question as to commitments undertaken.

Second, the United States should work closely with Latin American and European democracies to mobilize international pressure on the Sandinistas to put their new constitution into effect, to permit their internal opposition to function more openly, and to reschedule and hold their municipal elections.

We should also press for amnesty provisions to allow Nicaraguans who want to return to participate in their nation's life freely and securely.

Third, we can and should provide support to the Nicaraguan groups that are vital to democratic development: the church, democratic political parties, trade unions, and professional associations.

The National Endowment for Democracy and its constituent institutions can help, as can private institutions and foundations and other organizations in this country, in Latin America and in Europe.

Finally, the Kissinger Commission recommended a program of economic and other aid to Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala to strengthen their own commitments to democratic politics, economic development and human rights.

S. 184, introduced by Senators Dodd and Weicker, talked about this morning, would make available $300 million to those countries to bolster their democracies. Such a move would be an important first step in putting before the people of Nicaragua the examples of vibrant democracies on their borders and even hold out the possibility of economic assistance to Nicaragua once it embarked on a democratic course.

Democracy will not come to Nicaragua by treaty, by political formula, or by fiat. It will take time and persistent effort to build the pressure for democracy in that country, and the United States must be in the forefront of the effort toward this objective. It should join its friends and neighbors in Latin America to pursue a common course of action toward our common goal.

As I said at the outset, Mr. Chairman, it is high time to develop a new policy toward Nicaragua which will have broad bipartisan national support and international respect. Such a policy should not depend primarily on military force that is divorced from any serious negotiating strategy. It should be developed and implemented in cooperation with our Latin American allies and neighbors, rather than against their own best judgment.

It should, in short, be a policy that will be credible, sustainable, supportable, and worthy of the greatest democracy on Earth.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Linowitz may be found in the appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Ambassador Linowitz.

As you know, this hearing was called to consider the bill of Senator Dodd and Senator Weicker and you mentioned that you support one portion of it.

Would you recommend passage of the bill as it is, or do you oppose it?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. The bill has three parts to it. And while I have not had a chance to study it carefully, I have, I must admit, a different reaction to each of the three parts.

As I said in my prepared statement, I warmly endorse the $300 million allocation to the other Central American countries for the reasons indicated.

I have a bit of a question about the termination of the $40 million which would now be forthcoming based on previous authorization, not because I have supported aid to the Contras as desirable in order to achieve our objectives, because had I been in the Congress I would have voted against the $100 million appropriation, but because I wish there was some quid for that quo. I wish there were some way of tying the cessation of the $40 million to the kind of thing involved in the Habib letter that I mentioned, which is to say aid ceases once they have signed an agreement.

But on that score, I still believe that the right course is not to look to the aid to the Contras as a way to deal with the problem, but to find a way of withdrawing from it under circumstances which will advance our objectives.

The third part of the bill calls for our discontinuing economic and other aid to countries which undertake to supply assistance to the Contras, and that is designed to get at the problem which we had in this country in the Iran situation.

I am uneasy about that, Mr. Chairman, because I think it is aiming a weapon at other countries in order to be able to deal with an internal problem. Our problem here is how to assure that people don't do what was done in the case of Iran but not to purport to impinge upon the sovereignty of other countries, which may for their own good reasons want to support the Contras. But what we are aiming at, as I understand it, is to assure that this is not done around the United States and perhaps with the support and encouragement of some in the United States.

So that is where I come out on the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. To abbreviate it, you support the $300 million. Do you support the other aspects of the bill?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I question the last more than I do the second, but I have a wish that there were some way of tying in the discontinuance of aid with calling for some kind of undertaking on the part of the Sandinistas.

The CHAIRMAN. What can be done in your view to revitalize Contadora? It seems to have lost momentum.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. The greatest thing to revitalize in my judgment would be to have the United States really support it. We have been paying lipservice. We say all the right things, but then we undercut it when the times comes for an effective cooperative undertaking.

Last week, the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America spoke about it in disparaging terms. All of us are disappointed the Contadora has not done more. All of us recognize its weakness.

But we should be warmly endorsing with everything we have got this initiative on the part of the Latin American countries. When I was Ambassador to the Organization of American States, I would have prayed for the kind of leadership that the Contadora countries and the four supporting nations have undertaken in trying to deal with this issue.

We should be giving them all kinds of support, cooperation, undertakings, which will give them the chance to try to find a way to deal with this thing peacefully. We have not done it, and as a matter of fact that has been a crippling factor in my view.

Of course we have got to be sure that whatever they come up with will fully meet our needs and we should play a part in the formulation of proposals to be put forward. But it does take the United States to make it work.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Helms.

Senator HELMS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Linowitz, your statement does not address the legislation, and that is fine. Clearly, you believe it is realistic to negotiate with the Sandinistas; is that correct?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. I didn't get that, sir. Clearly I am what?

Senator **Helms**. Clearly, you consider it realistic to negotiate with the Sandinistas.

Ambassador **Linowitz**. Yes, sir.

Senator **Helms**. Prior to the free, fair, and internationally observed elections which you mentioned in your own statement?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. Yes, sir.

Senator **Helms**. You don't think they ought to be held accountable for the breaking of the promise at the time they got the appropriation from Congress?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. Senator, we have got to decide what it is we are trying to accomplish. If we are trying to avoid what the President has labeled a vital security threat to the United States, you try to figure out how do you negotiate or else fight in order to achieve that objective?

I believe we can negotiate with the Sandinista government under the aegis of Contadora and with our help and cooperation, an agreement which will cover that.

Senator **Helms**. We have only limited time. Will you identify for me one or two or three of the instances in all of world history when freedom has been served by negotiation with Communists?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. If you are ignoring the arms control negotiations, I believe that freedom is served by arms control negotiations with a Communist country called the Soviet Union.

Senator **Helms**. You get a lot of argument about that. But I think we lost that negotiation. Will Rogers said back in his day that we never lost a war nor won a negotiation. That was before Vietnam and we gave that away.

But let me get onto something else. When you were negotiating, sir, what many call the giveaway of the Panama Canal, did you have any relationship with General Noriega of Panama?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. No, sir.

Senator **Helms**. None. Well, do you know what the relationship between Noriega and Fidel Castro was at that time?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. No, I do not. I was dealing with people on behalf of General Torrisos who was then the President.

Senator **Helms**. Well, I note that General Noriega said in an interview during the weekend—I think it was with John McLaughlin—that Fidel Castro had always been a good friend to Panama.

Do you have any assessment of the relationship between Noriega and Castro today?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. No, except that I know that there certainly was nothing in the way of a close relationship while President Barletta was there. He was removed a year ago, or within the year, as you know.

What it is today under the present leadership, I am not quite clear. But I know that that charge has frequently been made, and it is true that there is a relationship. But how close it is, I don't know.

Senator **Helms**. So you do not have any notion about what General Noriega's relationship was with the Sandinistas at the time of the Panama Canal Treaty negotiations?

Ambassador **Linowitz**. No, sir.

Senator HELMS. So, you just don't know much about General Noriega?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I do not. He was there in the national guard at the time that I was doing the negotiating. He never was a participant in any of the discussions. I never met him.

Senator HELMS. That is the sum total of your knowledge about him?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Yes.

Senator HELMS. You do not know anything about Dr. Hugo Spadafora being decapitated while alive, and then brutally murdered?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I do not.

Senator HELMS. You haven't even read about it?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Oh, I have read in the paper. But the question is whether I had any personal knowledge. I do not have any personal knowledge.

Senator HELMS. I did not ask personal knowledge. I asked if you had any assessment of him.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. My assessment of General Noriega?

Senator HELMS. Yes.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. A troubling, perhaps dangerous man.

Senator HELMS. A perhaps dangerous man.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for your testimony this morning. I wonder if you might share with us some thoughts on the lessons that might be applicable, as a result of your experience in the Panama Canal negotiation, to the present effort to try to negotiate as you pointed out in your testimony—which I agree with—the national security concerns as raised in the Contadora points.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Senator Dodd, the first thing I would say is that I learned that in this country we can become very aroused and emotionally divisive on an issue, and sometimes go to lengths that do not serve our national interests. And when a decision is taken, we then find that it was not all as bad as we had thought, and we can live with it comfortably.

The President of the United States was, as you know, the man who led the fight against the Panama Canal Treaty. Although he has not told me so, I have not had any indication that he has been displeased with what has taken place since the new treaties have come into effect. And indeed, we all have reason for gratification at the way Panama has been acting with reference to the treaties and the relationship that has developed attendant upon the execution of the treaties.

In the case of Panama, as in the case of Nicaragua, we were assured by a number of people, including Senator Helms, that negotiation could only lead to disaster for the United States; that it was a giveaway, and that it was going to affect our security, and therefore it was something which would be against our interests and should be strongly resisted.

Since, as I say, the treaties have come into effect, the situation has improved. Indeed, I would venture to suggest, sir, that if we did not have the Panama Canal Treaties today, the administration would not be able to embark on its present course in Central America.

I would reflect upon that with some irony; that is, that because the Canal is not endangered that we are able to proceed as we are in Central America without greater concern for the possibilities of involvement and what this might mean militarily.

The final point I would make is that many things which do not seem possible at the negotiating table before you become involved become possible once you undertake to deal with them. There are things now which people say the Sandinistas would never agree to.

Until you try, until you make a general wholehearted effort to see whether you can come up with terms that would meet your own needs and still be acceptable to the U.S. side, you are not in a position to offer an answer. And any negotiator will undertake to tell you that unless you sit down at the negotiating table and give it a try, you cannot with any competence say that it will not work.

Senator DODD. As I understand it, the one part of the bill that you have the most difficulty with has to do with the third country assistance.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Yes.

Senator DODD. And I must tell you, as an author of the bill that, as a general proposition, I do not like the idea of restricting other countries from engaging in their own foreign policy, particularly our allies, because it can be dangerous.

But in this case here, my own feelings were that we are talking about three or four countries specifically. In fact, I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that the statement or the article appearing in the New York Times of January 22, 1987, referring to Secretary Shultz's appearance before the committee yesterday be included in the record where he cites or talks about at least one or two other instances where pressure was brought to bear on another country to provide assistance.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, that will be done.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. That is the reason for it. It is almost done as a favor to these other countries that find themselves in the very awkward position that really are not the dispensers of foreign aid in the first instance. They would not be if they are such recipients in the first instance from this country. And that is the rationale for it.

Obviously, I would not have included it, had we not just experienced serious problems and received the testimony we had as of yesterday. If we are going to be successful at this with an administration that seems absolutely committed to providing assistance one way or the other, then it seems to me that a provision like this may be necessary.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I understand completely, Senator, and I sympathize with what you are trying to accomplish and I puzzled about it when I first read it, about whether there is some way that could be modified to deal with the issue without involving the other matter which I find of some concern.

What bothers me is—and I assume will bother you—is that if a nation which has nothing to do with our foreign policy, but is one where we happen to be offering assistance for its own purposes and based on our own best interests, decides that it wants to be helpful to the Contras without anything having to do with intercession from anybody in the United States, is it not an intrusion on their sovereign rights to do what they want to do?

Now, your argument might be we have a right to say we are not going to give people money to give it away to somebody else. On the other hand, it bothers me simply because it is not limited to their undertaking to do this around what we are providing, but because it makes it a wholesale condemnation and punitive measure against any country which, no matter for what reasons, undertakes to be helpful.

Senator DODD. I appreciate your comments and I have the same questions as I work on that.

Thank you. My time has expired.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Dodd.

Senator Evans.

Senator EVANS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, you have had a long and distinguished history in Central and South American affairs. I am wondering if we might step back for an instance from the particular bill that we are now talking about, if you could tell me where you think our real priorities are today and where they should be over the intermediate term with respect to Central and South America.

Is it with any or all of the countries of South America? Is it truly with Nicaragua? Is it with Cuba? Or is it with Mexico? What are we likely to face in terms of the real problems for American foreign policy and relationships in that part of the world? Where are the hidden minefields that are likely to be ahead?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Senator Evans, I interjected in my statement earlier that in my view, the most dangerous and unsettling problem in terms of the security and stability of the hemisphere is the debt and economic crisis which now afflicts so much of Latin America. I believe it is far more dangerous than what is going on in Central America. In short, Central America is not central, should not be central to our concerns about our Latin American policy.

Unfortunately, we have made Central America and Nicaragua in particular the focal point of our attention in Latin America, as for example the President's speech last evening, in which the only thing he touched upon was Nicaragua. So I would say, first of all, we have got to recognize the vital interests that are at stake, and here I am not talking about economic concerns, I am talking about the fact that at a time when there are more democracies in Latin America than we have seen, gratifyingly, these countries are turning to democracy, but these democracies are fragile and they will not last if their economic base is not strong.

Senator EVANS. Would you care to rank those countries, many of whom have extraordinary debt ratios? Is there any one that is of particular importance as it relates to our own future interests, security or otherwise?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. You would have to worry about Mexico. Mexico has been going through some difficult times. It will continue to go through them. It is beset by other problems and we have to be conscious of the fact that its proximity raises issues which go beyond those that concern us, let's say, about a Brazil or any other country.

Senator EVANS. I view that as a wise observation indeed because it coincides so closely with my own views.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I am flattered.

Senator EVANS. But it seems to me that we are focusing on an impoverished country of smaller population than the State of Oregon, when right on our border we have a country that soon will be half the size of this country in terms of population and at current population growth rates will be as large as the United States in less than 50 years.

There are extraordinary problems which we ignore.

Let me turn to the specifics of your statement. You mention on page 9 the exchange between Ambassador Habib and Congressman Slattery talking about the "support for irregular forces would cease from the date of signature of an acceptable security arrangement with Nicaragua."

Could you expand on that a bit and tell me what you would consider acceptable security arrangements? In other words, what are the details of that arrangement with Nicaragua that in your view should cause us to then withdraw support from the Contra forces?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I tried to indicate in my statement, Senator Evans, the main ingredients. And, in brief, they would involve verifiable, credible assurances in a treaty, which I would hope would be framed with our assistance by the Contadora countries, dealing with armaments, foreign advisers, external aggression, all these things that constitute a threat to the security of this country and of the neighbors of Nicaragua.

I would bolster that, as I have said, by a clear statement which the Soviet Union and Cuba could not mistake, about our readiness if they try to establish bases or put in armed forces into Nicaragua.

I would also make clear that we stand ready to move troops if Nicaragua were to make an active attack against one of its neighbors. In short, I think we could put together, based on the 21 points of Contadora in the agreement which now has been worked out and needs to be strengthened still in its verification aspects, the kind of instrument that, when signed by Nicaragua, could give us an acceptable basis for dealing with the security issues and give us an opening to resolve the democratization issue.

Senator EVANS. And you believe it is possible to set up a system that would make it truly verifiable from a security point of view?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I recognize the problems, sir, and I have talked to people in the Pentagon and the State Department about that. But I also believe that it should be possible for us, with all of our technical capacity and surveillance achievements, to provide for monitoring with our help, and possibly, probably with some expense to us, to assure that these words are more than on paper and that they are observed and honored in practice.

Senator EVANS. One final thing. You would not include, as I understood from what you just said, you would not include in that particular kind of security arrangement, the provisos that would require internal changes in the governmental structure of Nicaragua—free elections and that sort of thing.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. That is right. I would take the same position that Henry Kissinger put it this way. He said: "Without Soviet and Cuban military and economic support, Nicaragua would be a nuisance rather than a threat." And what I am talking about is dealing with the threat and getting that obviated, and then dealing with the other which we want to accomplish, the democratization, but do not put them all on the same basis.

Senator EVANS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Simon.

I would say that Senator Dodd will be presiding from now on, because I have to move to another commitment.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of observations.

First of all, it is a superb statement. It is the kind of statement that I expect from Ambassador Sol Linowitz whose public service to this country has been extraordinary.

One observation. You mentioned the reflection on the Panama Canal Treaty and that we sometimes tend to be emotional in response to these things.

One of the things—and this is not directly at bearing right now, but it deals with the whole question of foreign relations—one of the problems is that we as a people are sometimes provincial, and one of the disturbing statistics that my colleague from North Carolina, Senator Sanford, would be interested in or I am sure is aware of; that is, the declining percentage of faculty members of our colleges and universities are teaching and studying abroad. That cannot be good news for this country long term, and it is something that I hope we take a look at.

Second, just two sentences, three sentences, from your statement I would just like to underscore. One is, "If one thing is clear, it is that the United States needs and does not have a sustainable national policy toward Nicaragua."

I think that is absolutely correct.

Second, you say, "The approach we have taken in Nicaragua commands very little support, either in Latin America or elsewhere in the world and, by its own admission, the administration's policy of supporting the Contras has resulted in a buildup of Sandinista strength and military force."

I concur in both statements. Again, I have no questions. If you would care to add anything further, Mr. Ambassador, we would be happy to hear from you. Otherwise, I will yield my time.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Thank you, Senator.

I share your concern about the failure of more exchange between us and others at universities in Latin America and elsewhere in the world. We are indeed a provincial nation. We are becoming more so as we cut back on that kind of exchange, and the opportunity to feel at home with other countries and to be aware of their own cultures, their own history, their own background.

I find that when I deal with representatives of other countries, they are far more knowledgeable certainly about our country than I am about theirs, certainly about what has gone on in the world and this is true about so many of the people that I see who undertake to deal with us here. So I fully subscribe to your concern and I do hope we can do something about it, and I know you are taking leadership in that regard.

Senator SIMON. I thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD [presiding]. Thank you, Senator Simon.

Senator Sanford.

Senator SANFORD. Well, I certainly share the sentiments expressed by Senator Simon about your service and about this statement. It seems to me that we have been unusually fearful of a little country that is in population no larger than Eastern North Carolina and much, much poorer.

Now, that distinction economically might not last too much longer if we continue to have the present administration's foreign policy. But for the moment, it seems to me an unfounded fear that this little poverty-stricken country can do anything to endanger us, except to draw in the Cuban and the Soviet forces. So our objective ought to be to get those out and that ought to be the primary objective, and we ought not to be doing those things that prevent that from happening. And you have well made that point.

I thought you said a minute ago that if indeed Senator Dodd's bill was passed, that it ought to be attached to some quid pro quo, perhaps the signing of an agreement, perhaps the Contadora Agreement.

My question is more of a political question. What can Congress do? Is there any way that progress can be made in the direction suggested in your testimony? Is there any way progress can be made in the face of such firm opposition by the President of the United States?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. What I have undertaken to propose, Senator, as you know, is in the hopes that there might be bipartisan support for this kind of policy.

So in the first instance, I would hope that representatives of the Congress and representatives of the administration could sit down together and say, "Look, what we have to evolve is a policy that makes sense; that will best serve our national interests and that takes into account our separate feelings about how we ought to deal with the issue."

The fact is, right now the Congress——

Senator SANFORD. But that is not going to happen.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Well, I would try it. You know, I am a firm believer in the admonition of Casey Stengel who once said, "They say you can't do it, but sometimes that doesn't always work."

I believe we ought to at least try and see what can be done about it.

Senator SANFORD. Of course, I think there has been a great deal tried.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. I do not know that the representatives of the Congress have sat down with the administration with an alternate policy, and I want to stress this. It is the one thing I find missing in the Dodd proposal. This is not an alternate policy.

I think the Congress owes it.

Senator SANFORD. But the Congress, in your opinion, can develop an alternate policy?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Yes, sir. And I would say "should."

Senator SANFORD. I wanted to make that point because it seems to me there is not any other strategy left.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Yes, sir. I fully agree with that.

Senator SANFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Senator Sarbanes.

Senator SARBANES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I want to join in welcoming Ambassador Linowitz and to say that he has made some extraordinary contributions to our national interests over the years. I am pleased to have him here before the committee and I think his statement here today is but another example of the kind of very positive and constructive contribution he has made.

Ambassador Linowitz, since you have dealt extensively with the Latin American countries and with their leaders, and you continue of course to do that in the Inter-American Dialogue, I take it you would say that your approach, as you have described it on pages 4 and 5 of your statement is one that would have the general support of our neighbors to the south as a way of trying to resolve this situation.

Would that be correct?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Yes, sir. I believe so.

Senator SARBANES. Now, what do you say to the assertion that we hear on occasion, including at times from administration witnesses, that regardless of what they say publicly, in private these leaders and responsible officials tell a very different story; that privately they say they are really not unhappy with the administration's approach and they think we need to carry a big stick in order to get a resolution of the situation?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. The thing that is so difficult with that argument is how do you disprove what was said privately by A to B if you are unsure as to what indeed took place?

What I generally say when I am told that—and I am—is that you ought to hear what they say to me privately, and indeed they do talk to me privately.

Senator Dodd said earlier that it is in the nature of the Latin Americans, because so many of them are beholden to the United States and want to remain in our good graces, to tailor their responses sometimes to the inquirer's, and they will soften or harden their position depending on where they think you are.

Now, that is a fact and so therefore I can understand that there may have been different nuances in responses.

I know when I was talking to President Duarte about how he was going to respond to the issue of support of the Contras, I was amused and bemused by the elaborate formulation which eventually led to his saying "I don't think that's for me. That is an internal matter."

Now, one who knows the Latins knows how to read that, but nonetheless this would have been the expression when he certainly felt strongly that any external involvement on the part of the United States in an internal matter in Latin America was not a good sign and one that should not even be encouraged.

So, having said that, there is not even the slightest question in mind, as I said at the outset of my statement, Senator Sarbanes, that I have talked to a number of people not only as members of the Dialogue, but others who have been in positions of responsibility throughout the hemisphere, including leaders in a number of countries, and what I have said here reflects my best judgment as to what they really believe and therefore the position that I have advocated is one that I think would meet with a warm reception on their part.

Senator SARBANES. I also would go on to point out that if they do say something different privately, as administration witnesses have contended, it would be an interesting commentary on the situation in which these leaders may find themselves with respect to public opinion and the forces within their own country.

I am not saying that they are in fact taking different positions publicly and privately, but even if you accept the premise of that argument, the fact that they find themselves constrained in adopting a public position on this matter says something about the nature of the perceptions of the public within their own countries.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Could I just add one more footnote on this issue? It is in a way insulting to those leaders to act as though they cannot be trusted in their public pronouncements.

President Sarney of Brazil, I believe twice had to make a public statement denying that he had privately said something different from what he said publicly. What we are saying is that people like Sarney or President Alfonsin of Argentina, no matter what they say they don't really believe it, they don't mean it, they are telling us something different when we are talking to them privately, and that is not respectful toward people who are deserving of our respect.

Senator SARBANES. Mr. Chairman, my time is up. Could I put one final question, and then I am going to have to depart.

Senator DODD. Absolutely.

Senator SARBANES. You indicated to a question from one of my colleagues that you felt that the Congress had to develop an alternate policy.

I am a little hard put to understand how the Congress would do that, since an essential part of any alternate policy, it seems to me, would be a willingness by the administration to adopt that approach. A necessary ingredient of any alternate policy with a chance of success is going to be the whole negotiating approach, the whole representation to other countries, the marshaling of international opinion and so forth, which can only be done by the administration, not by the Congress.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. The mere fact, Senator, that it might not be implemented does not mean that it should not be formulated. It seems to me that there is a responsibility, if I may say so, there is a responsibility on the Congress if it is going to be credible and not willing to support a policy because it thinks it knows a better one, to try to formulate what that policy ought to be.

I do not think it is enough for this Congress, composed of the kind of people who make it up to say we will not accept what the President is offering us, but we will not tell you what he ought to be doing instead.

If there is here a judgment, as I sense there is, that there is a better course for the United States, then I think it is the responsibility of the Congress at least to formulate it and perhaps, through persuasion or whatever other tactic, see if it can be converted into policy.

Senator SARBANES. If we sent the administration your statement and said that constituted our formulation, would we have met our responsibility in this regard?

Ambassador LINOWITZ. If you really believed it, if you were not just testing, if you really believed it and said that you hoped the administration would be willing to proceed on this course, at least the issue would be joined. You would then know whether or not there was an openmindedness in considering an alternative policy.

Senator SARBANES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Ambassador Linowitz, I want to, on behalf of Senator Pell, the committee, and myself, thank you immensely for your time this morning. As has been stated by Senator Sarbanes and others, your testimony this morning, as expected, was eloquent.

I appreciate your comments, your thoughts, not only your support of various positions of the bill, but your thoughtful criticisms as well as various aspects of it and, certainly as one of the authors of that legislation, will take that into account as we begin a markup at some point in the next few weeks.

So on behalf of the committee, we thank you once again for appearing before us and sharing with us your thoughts.

Ambassador LINOWITZ. Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. If I could, what I would like to do at this point is to have our next panel, along with panel 4, appear simultaneously, because we are running a bit behind.

The panel includes Prof. Kenneth Sharpe of the Department of Political Science of Swarthmore College; Col. Samuel Dickens, director, Inter-American Affairs, American Security Council Foundation; and Gen. Robert Schweitzer, former representative to the Inter-American Defense Board—all of whom will appear simultaneously.

I understand my colleague, Senator Helms, is a bit squeezed on time, so in courtesy to him I am going to ask you, General, if you would proceed first and then we will go to Professor Sharpe and then Colonel Dickens.

We welcome you to the committee and we would like if we could—after accepting all your prepared statements and including them in the record as if read, to ask you to abbreviate so we could move along. We apologize for the shortening of time. I don't think Senator Weicker and I anticipated we would be sitting where you are for 1½ hours. So we apologize.

General Schweitzer.

STATEMENT OF GEN. ROBERT SCHWEITZER, FORMER REPRESENTATIVE TO THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE BOARD

General SCHWEITZER. Senator Dodd, thank you very much for allowing me to come here. I do not have a prepared witness statement because I did not really know until yesterday that I would be here, but I do want to speak very much from my heart as well as from experience in working with Latin America as to the nature of your legislation which you proposed this morning.

I think some background on my part would be helpful to your committee and to the record of these proceedings. In 1979, I was the one who led the fight to seat a Sandinista representative at the Inter-American Defense Board when no other nation wanted to have a Sandinista on the board, and I did so partly because of my instructions—I would have followed them in any case—but also because I believed that we should make an effort to reach out and see if we could not achieve, bring forward the pluralism that was promised in the Sandinista revolution.

Subsequently, I have met and worked with all of the leaders of Latin America. Indeed, my superiors at the Inter-American Defense Board were the 20 heads of state, the foreign ministers, and the ministers of defense. I have met and spoken to all of these people, to include the Sandinista leadership. And I have tried as hard as anybody could to make this work, to bring out some kind of a useful and meaningful relationship between our two countries.

We offered—and I was very much involved in it—to provide the military support to the Sandinista army in 1979 and 1980. We did so because we knew that that would be one opportunity to work with them at a soldier-to-soldier level and all the way down and to keep them from going to Cuba and the Soviet Union.

They not only spurned those efforts, which were very genuine and very generous, but they then lied publicly about it and said that they had been forced to go to Cuba and the Soviet Union for arms because the United States refused to provide them. That is an absolute falsehood and was not the first, but part of many of the tissue of lies that then came out of the Sandinista regime.

For 1 year at the Inter-American Defense Board, my vice chairman was a Sandinistan, the former head of the Air Force of Nicaragua. During the time that the Sandinistas, whom I had helped install in the Inter-American Defense Board were there, they took documents from the board and created a forged letter, forgery of my name, and many, many mistakes—about 20—in the document which we were able to establish to the satisfaction of the Organization of American States.

The document was preposterous. It was a forged letter, supposedly from me, congratulating President Pinochet and thanking him for sending brigades to Honduras and to El Salvador. Nothing like that had ever even been contemplated, of course. No such letter ever existed. But again, it is part of the tissue of lies, the deception, the doublecrossing and the doubledealing that we saw from the Sandinista regime.

I have two sons, one a ranger lieutenant, and another an engineer lieutenant. The last thing, after 36 years of service and seven Purple Hearts, that I want to see is my sons involved in any kind of combat.

If we are going to prevent combat, we are going to have to do something quite different from what I have heard this morning in this room.

Mr. Chairman, I was stunned to hear that the policy has failed. Policy at one level—if it has failed, it has failed because it has never been applied; it has never been properly resourced, funded, or executed. But on another level and a more meaningful one, it did not fail. It has prevented Nicaragua from becoming a Poland or an Iran, and either of those things would have happened without the policy that has been in place and been working.

I heard—and I believe it was you, sir—say that if we should do anything, we should put it all on the table and have a debate leading toward a declaration of war. I would want, because I do not speak for the Pentagon in any way—I am now retired and I certainly don't speak for the Inter-American Defense Board—I would like that to be very much part of this record—but I would like the record to show that I have worked since 1979, night and day, weekends, months, to prevent the need for U.S. forces to have to intervene in Central America.

Sincere as all of the views were, I would respectfully submit to you, sir, and to all of the other panel members who spoke along these lines, that our failure to support the democratic resistance and to give the people of Nicaragua a chance to express themselves is going to lead to the very kind of intervention that nobody wants to see.

The matter is really very complex. All of us want peace, nobody more than a soldier who has seen far too much of war. I am 100-percent disabled.

But if we are going to have peace, sometimes you have to take the necessary steps, the unpleasant ones to secure peace. Otherwise, you have the peace of the tomb, and I think that is clearly the direction we were headed for in Nicaragua under the Sandinista regime.

Ambassador Linowitz, whom I respect and admire and have learned much under, said that many of the nine commandantes were Communists. That is really not entirely accurate. They all are, and they are core Marxist-Leninists. These are not men who are like Democrats or Republicans. These are men who are the enemies of democratic socialism such as you see in Europe and in other countries of the world. These are men who are determined to create a single Marxist-Leninist state from Mexico down to Panama. They are being very careful because Mexico has been carrying their water for them all through the 7 years of the failed Contadora process—they are very careful not to say that their plans also include Mexico. But they have said in public, over and over again, all of the nine commandantes, that they intend to create a single Marxist-Leninist state that will run from the borders of Mexico down and through Panama.

I take them at their words and I think it is a terrible mistake to say that the United States has been beating up on a poor impoverished little country, because that is to not understand at all the nature of counterinsurgency warfare or the nature of subversion.

The Sandinistas have learned well from their predecessors and tutors, the Cubans, how to conduct this kind of war, and it is an expansionist war.

Mr. Chairman, I wish I could be under oath, because I tell you as sincerely and as strongly as I possibly can that from the viewpoint of the Army senior strategist, the position that I held on two different tours in General Eisenhower's and General Marshall's old office, that the United States is at its gravest test in its history since perhaps the Civil War. This is not a tiny little threat. This is a major, serious, tremendously significant threat and we have not begun to come to understand how serious and how deeply and gravely that it will concern us and threaten us.

It is not a mistake and not an exaggeration and not in any way a harkening back to the despised and rejected hobgoblin politics of Senator Joseph McCarthy to say that communism is a major threat and it emanates from this satellite that is being created before our eyes in Nicaragua.

During the time that I was sending aid missions down there at the time of their floods, bringing a badly burned helicopter pilot from their air force up here for treatment at the Atlanta Burn Center, and helping to provide other assistance to make friends with them, they were starting the expansion of their military, which is really mind boggling.

Here is a country almost half the size of El Salvador with an armed force that is more than twice the size of El Salvador, 150 tanks, 200 armored vehicles, 300 missiles, where before they had none of these things.

What we are watching is a step-by-step buildup of a major dangerous opponent because of the nature of the war of subversion.

Of course, we could go down in a conventional way and put an end to it, and probably do it in strategic terms in 3 days, but that is exactly now the policy that I would say would have failed. And I think that is the goal to which we ought to be proceeding, to keep that very thing from happening and to allow you to continue to carry on the great ideals of your father which were so well espoused when he was here.

I am sorry the Senator from Illinois is not here. I received my commission directly from Adlai Stevenson when he was Governor of the State of Illinois in the Chicago Black Horse Troop. I was a labor organizer, the CIO, the American Newspaper Guild where I was an officer in Chicago before I came in the Army, and I worked with Friendship House and with the Catholic Labor Alliance in that part of my lifetime. And those ideals, Mr. Chairman, of social justice, of economic reform, and all of the things that have been espoused by the other members of the committee and by the other presenters this morning are mine. In fact, that is what I feel I have been serving for and was wounded for repeatedly in my service in the U.S. Army.

We need a great deal of reform in Latin America. The economic factor should be at least 3-to-1—$300 million is not enough. You could double it or triple it. And the economists, sir, to whom I have spoken would tell us that not one of those dollars would be given away; that your return would be 3-to-1, 7-to-1, 15-to-1, some of them would say. And that point was made.

But I think again—and I would conclude my opening remarks on this point by saying that as a strategist, our ability to reinforce NATO in time of war, to comply with what is in the defense guidance, the current defense guidance—and for the first time it is not classified—it says that the primary obligation of the United States is to provide a defense of the region and a defense of the hemisphere—this hemisphere—not Europe, not NATO.

I think that there are some key words in the Foreign Security Assistance Act of 1961 which have been forgotten. The preamble of the policy which states that as long as there is communism in the world and it is exporting its goals and its objectives and its policies through subversive means, the United States must act positively and strongly and exert its leadership to that end to prevent that from happening.

I think if we are not going to support the Contras, then the U.S. Senate and the U.S. Congress ought to go back and revise those documents and say that this Foreign Security Assistance Act of 1961, which is voted on and revised and amended almost every year, is invalid; that communism is not a threat; and there is no danger and we do not have to worry about it.

I think the reason that that has not been done is because nobody in this Capitol Hill believes that.

Thank you, sir.

Senator **Dodd**. Thank you very much, General.

Professor Sharpe.

STATEMENT OF PROF. KENNETH SHARPE, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

Professor **Sharpe**. It is a pleasure to address the committee, particularly you, Senator Dodd, and you, Senator Helms, on an issue of such importance.

I have been working in Latin America and Central America since 1970 and have done over 4 years of field research in Mexico and the Caribbean and in Central America itself. Much of the testimony that I am going to be giving today has come out of a project that I have been working on for the last 4 years with 15 other scholars, doing a study, including field work, of what the impact of U.S. foreign policy has actually been in the region, particularly under the last two administrations, the administration of Carter and the administration of Reagan.

I would ask if the short final chapter of that book could be included in the record, since it does outline a new vision for a foreign policy.

Senator **Dodd**. How short is it, Professor?

Professor **Sharpe**. About 18 pages.

Senator **Dodd**. I think we can include that.

[The information referred to may be found in the appendix.]

Professor **Sharpe**. The President and his advisers have urged us not to consider the recent Iran arms scandal in judging the aid to the Contras. They say, "Look, any malfeasance on the part of the White House is not the fault of the Contras. We have got to judge the Contras on their own merit." On that I want to back the administration. I think we do have to judge the Contras on their own merits, and I want to suggest some criteria by which we can do that.

There are a number of very troubling questions that we have got to take seriously, questions that I know many of you have been following in the newspapers. For example: Can the Contras succeed? Are they effective?

I argue in the written testimony—but will not go into detail now—that after 5 years and over $200 million, they have not proven effective and it is highly unlikely they will.

Are they gross and systematic violators of human rights is another question. I argue in the testimony that the evidence looks bad; that respected international rights groups like Amnesty International and America's Watch have repeatedly documented Contra kidnapings, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, torture and even mutilation of prisoners.

There are other troubling questions about corruption and drug dealing amongst the Contras, questions that you yourselves will be investigating and will soon have far better information on than I now have.

The U.S. Senate must seriously consider all these questions because we would be squandering our credibility, our resources, and our moral authority if we were backing the tactics of an exiled army that had little chance to win and whose leaders were pocketing our money for private gain.

But in addition to these important questions, I want to urge that we not lose track of the central issue. Is Contra aid in the national interest of the United States?

There are four basic questions we must ask.

Question No. 1: Does continued Contra aid support our interests in promoting regional peace? I argue in my written statement that it certainly does not; that current border tensions, like those we have witnessed recently on the Nicaraguan-Honduran border, show exactly how dangerous that policy can be in terms of risking regional war.

But what about the unlikely case of a Contra takeover of Managua? Would that help ensure regional peace? Under this scenario there is no question that pro-Sandinista forces would regroup in the mountains. They are well-trained, well-armed, highly committed, and will continue to enjoy substantial support at least among some sectors of the population.

However much we may dislike the Sandinistas, we have to recognize the reality there; that if the Contras took Managua, even with the 3 days of U.S. support General Schweitzer suggested would make this possible—although he hoped to avoid it—the most likely outcome of that so-called victory would not be peace, but a tragic, costly, prolonged civil war.

Question No. 2: What impact does Contra aid have on our interest in promoting economic development in the region? Here again, I think the answer is clear. No matter how many millions we throw into that region, there will be no incentive for the private sector to invest and every incentive for capital to flee as long as the threat of war destabilizes that region.

Now, those two interests in peace and development are often overshadowed in the minds of pragmatic policymakers whose first interest is to protect regional and national security. So that leads to the third question.

Does continued Contra aid serve U.S. national security interests? I argue, in my written statement, that much of the administration argument here confuses rhetoric with reality, talking, for example, about Soviet beachheads in the region. Such rhetoric, I think, is obfuscating because it fails to make important distinctions. For example, the distinction between a Soviet presence or a Soviet connection and Soviet control. It fails to understand that Marxists among the Sandinistas are first and foremost nationalists, not Soviet proxies. It fails to understand that the Soviets do not have an interest in providing massive aid to the Sandinistas, given the incredible economic burden that Cuba has already proved to be.

Indeed, I would venture to guess that Gorbachev wakes up saying in the Kremlin the same thing that our President wakes up saying in the White House: "We don't want another Cuba."

But let's cut through the rhetoric. There are still tough security interests and issues we must confront. One vital interest is the interest in keeping Soviet offensive strategic weapons out of the region. There are other important security interests, too, like discouraging Nicaragua from attacking its neighbors, or vice versa, and discouraging substantial material assistance to rebel groups in these other countries.

So, the question then becomes: Are the Contras the right instrument to protect these interests? I will just take one of those interests because time is short, the one I think to be most important.

Do we have to overthrow the Nicaragua Government to keep Soviet missiles and offensive weapons out of the region? There are three considerations here.

First, the Sandinistas have no interest in allowing such offensive weapons into the region. They do not have that interest because they themselves do not want to be pawns in any East-West confrontation.

Second, given the capabilities the Soviets have developed with long-range and submarine-launched missiles and their earlier experience of badly miscalculating the U.S. response in 1962, they are not likely to try again.

Third, and most important, this issue is not primarily an issue between the United States and Nicaragua. This is an issue between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States must state plainly and clearly to the Soviets, so there can be no miscalculation, that such an action would be as unacceptable now as it was in 1962. The United States needs to be prepared to respond with overwhelming force to such threats and to make clear that we have the capability and will to do so.

But aiding a Contra attempt to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government to keep out Soviet offensive weapons is as costly as it is unnecessary.

I think the most important point I want to make on the security issue—we can go into other details later if you would like—is that security questions are legitimate U.S. concerns, but there is a much better way to deal with them. That way has been shown by people like Sol Linowitz in the testimony given earlier by Senator Dodd and Senator Weicker.

But the administration has blocked those Contadora negotiations with another demand which the Nicaraguan Government refuses to negotiate. The administration demands that the Sandinistas give up power as part of any settlement. This is the issue of so-called democratization.

This brings me to my fourth and final question about national interest. What impact does our support for the Contras have on our national interests in encouraging democracy in Nicaragua?

I have saved this issue for last because it is the most sensitive, the most explosive. Any time an analyst shows that U.S. policy is irrational, any time an analyst shows that we are shooting ourselves in the foot, he or she risks being dismissed out of hand as pro-Sandinista and, by implication, unpatriotic.

But the reality in Nicaragua is far more complex than most politicians care to admit. Nicaragua is far from being a Western-style democracy, and we could document the expulsion of priests, the censorship of the press, the mistreatment of prisoners, and long pretrial detention to demonstrate that.

But I think as America's Watch, Amnesty International, and other observers have shown, Nicaragua is also far from being a totalitarian dungeon. But I don't want to debate this issue here since there is already ample public documentation.

I want to move beyond the debate about the pluses and minuses of the Nicaraguan Government and set the following question for your consideration. It is a rarely asked but crucial question: Is continued aid to the Contras the best way for the United States to encourage democracy in Nicaragua?

To navigate through the rhetorical quicksand, there are two basic points to remember.

Point No. 1: The security threat that the Contras are posing promotes less, not more, political freedom inside of Nicaragua. Those who would ask you to believe that the Contra threat has encouraged more openness, that it is the Contra threat, as General Schweitzer said, that prevents another Poland or another Iran, are asking you to believe something that flies in the face of everything we know about how even well-developed democracies respond when war is being made against them.

During the Algerian war, the French were involved in massive arrests and torture. The courts used by the British Government in Northern Ireland denied political defendants the right to trial, just like the Sandinista tribunals used for security cases today in Nicaragua.

Here in our own country, news reports about the civil war were often censored. The espionage acts during the First World War made it a crime to "promote the cause of our enemies," or to obstruct recruiting; and we interned all persons of Japanese origin, over 112,000 after Pearl Harbor, without credible proof that they were involved in any attempt at sabotage.

I refer to such comparisons not to excuse the Nicaraguans by any means, not to excuse them by showing our wrongdoing, but to remind ourselves that war is not a great promoter of domestic political freedom and democracy.

The second point: What would happen if the Contras won? Let us suppose that by some miracle the more decent, the less authoritarian people who are now generally weak inside the Contra movement—I refer to respected politicians like Arturo Cruz—suppose they took control of a Contra-run government. What then?

Imagine the prior costs of that victory, a country economically devastated by years of civil conflict, thousands of well-armed, well-trained Sandinista guerrillas in the hills, undoubtedly supported by some sectors of the population, fighting now to oust the Contras. It defies imagination to believe that a government led, even by the best intentioned politicians, could survive without imposing anything less than severe authoritarian rule.

So, whether you look at the situation as it is now, or you look at it as it would be under the Contras: The current policy is not—I repeat not—promoting our interest in democracy in Nicaragua.

Let me summarize and conclude. Those who support Contra aid with the worthy intention of promoting democracy are likely to make things worse rather than better. More seriously, they are using the issue of democratization to block, as Sol Linowitz pointed out, to block negotiations on the far more vital security interests we have in the region, as well as the interests we have in peace and development.

What then would a more realistic policy look like? The outlines of that policy have been given to you earlier today and I will not repeat them. But let me conclude by stressing that such a negotiated solution can only succeed if it wins the total backing of the administration; that the central interest of the administration is democratization, which boils down to negotiating the Sandinistas out of power, a demand that makes a mockery of real diplomacy.

The recent diversion of Iranian arms profits to the Contras and the whole network for private foreign policy which circumvented Congress demonstrates that the administration is willing to pursue its policy of rollback as long as it has the wherewithal to keep the Contra option alive in whatever form.

A new, realistic, principled policy is within our grasp, but not until Congress cuts off aid.

[The prepared statement of Professor Sharpe may be found in the appendix.]

Senator **Dodd**. Thank you very much, Professor Sharpe.

Colonel Dickens, we welcome you this morning.

STATEMENT OF COL. SAMUEL T. DICKENS, DIRECTOR OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS, AMERICAN SECURITY COUNCIL FOUNDATION

Colonel **Dickens**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, members of the committee.

Senator Dodd, when I left the office this morning, the president of the American Security Council for which I work, John Fisher, said to me, "Did you know that Senator Dodd's father was coeditor of the American Security Council Washington Report on radio for many years?"

I thought I would bring that to your attention.

I would like to have my entire statement put in the record, since I will not be able to address all of its points.

Senator **Dodd**. I said that applies to all of you. That will be included in the record and we ask you to summarize.

Colonel **Dickens**. Thank you. I have two other requests, please. I had an article that was pro-Contra aid that came out in the Orlando Sentinel last Sunday, a week ago Sunday, and I have a onepager that lists 21 reasons why we should break diplomatic relations with the Sandinistas that I would like to include in the record.

Senator DODD. Without objection.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Colonel DICKENS. Briefly on myself, I was brought up in Latin America, in Argentina and Chile, and brought up speaking Spanish and English, and spent all of my life, while involved in other military duties in an Air Force career, keeping close tabs on what was going on in Latin America.

For 4½ years before I retired in 1979, I was in charge of the Western Hemisphere Division, Plans and Policy, of the Air Force. That was a period of withdrawal of military advisers, trainers, from all of Latin America, general officers from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Mexico.

It was also a period of time that we negotiated the Panama Canal Treaties in which I saw a President exert his pressure on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, their caving into this politization of the Panama Canal Treaties. I saw that personally and know that it happened.

I saw the Sandinistas come to power and I knew they were Marxist-Leninists. It was in our intelligence information. We all knew it. We saw the armed supplies from Fidel Castro being flown to Panama by Panamanian military or civilian pilots. We saw Panama deliver that military equipment to Costa Rica, and Costa Rica involvement. And there was the Mexican support, deeply involved politically in support of the Sandinistas. We saw Venezuela do the same thing.

These are the primary countries of the Contadora process now that are supportive to the continuation of the Communist Sandinistas in power, and I am talking about Venezuela and I am talking about Panama and I am talking about Mexico.

Colombia has been through a period of intimidation. It has been revealed by their secretaries of defense, when they accused Fidel Castro of deliberately receiving drugs from Colombia and arms being returned to Colombia, to the M-19 guerrillas. We also know about the arms that the Sandinistas provided to the M-19 when they were involved in the takeover of the Palace of Justice and subsequently half the supreme court justices being murdered.

I can think of no higher priority today for our Nation's national security, furthered by supporting foreign policy initiatives than to have a major focus on the Central American crisis.

Now, though economic stagnation, poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and a host of other related social and economic problems have long plagued the region, more recent developments threaten our own security and thus demand the full attention of all Americans.

Now, for the second time in 50 years, we face a major projection of power by a totalitarian system external to the Western Hemisphere, threatening developing and stable democracies alike.

When I make these comments, I am going to highlight what I feel are the most important ones. Ever since I retired in 1979, I have not spent a single day, other than working on the problem of Central America. Why? Because what I am about to read to you in the next few minutes is my concern and why I am so deeply involved. And it is not just from security standpoints. I have been all over Central America in recent years, and I have been tramping over the so-called cooperatives in El Salvador, I have watched the policies develop there with the election of President Duarte, I have seen what has happened in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama. I follow those events closely on a daily basis and not just by reading the American press, but by reading Latin American press as well—in Spanish.

Let's remind ourselves a little bit of the historical situation. In the late 1930's, that threat that I spoke to you about 50 years ago came from Nazi Germany when Adolf Hitler made major efforts—major efforts—to subvert and influence Latin American nations.

President Roosevelt, in his State of the Union message, in January 1941—now that is a full 11 months before Pearl Harbor—and he said in that statement, "We cannot foretell tonight just when the acts of the dictators will ripen into an attack on this hemisphere and us, but we know enough by now"—remember, 1941—"we know enough by now to realize that it would be suicide to wait until they are in our front yard. Anyone with an atlas and a reasonable knowledge of the sudden striking force of modern war knows that it would be stupid to wait until a probable enemy has gained a foothold from which to attack; old-fashioned commonsense calls for the use of strategy which will prevent such an enemy from gaining a foothold in the first place."

And we are talking about 1941.

Then when Pearl harbor hit, what happens? In 8 months, the first 8 months after Pearl Harbor, we lose 183 merchant ships in the Caribbean Basin, the Gulf of Mexico; not in the North Atlantic, not going over to Europe—in the Caribbean Basin. And it takes us 6 months to sink the first German submarine. Some people say there were only six submarines and they were based in Germany, not in Cuba.

So now we face a totalitarian global threat more threatening, exceedingly more skillful and far more successful in employing all aspects of warfare during these so-called times of peace—with psychological warfare, deception, disinformation, subversion, and terrorism.

We need to recall as an important element of this warfare that Soviet efforts to influence and control Latin American university systems—and something was said about university systems before—but remember, this effort to influence and control Latin American systems had its origins more than 60 years ago by the Soviets in Latin America. And since then, university professors and students have been leading leftist and Communist guerrilla groups in attacks on authority, whether rightest or constitutionally elected.

So we would be a little bit foolish if we did not have at least the same sense that President Roosevelt had in 1941.

Now, over the years, what happened to reflect our concern? We developed, with our inter-American allies, the Rio Treaty in 1947, and that predates NATO by 3 years. And it was a concern over the projection of communism in this hemisphere.

And you know the best-known operative clause of the NATO Treaty, Article V which I am going to quote, is virtually plagiarized from the Rio Treaty. It says: "An armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or in North America should be considered an attack against them all."

And then after that, there were a series of protocols from the Inter-American System and they identified the threat of communism. This was done in Caracas and it was also done in San José, Costa Rica in 1960—that the threat of communism was not just by overt military forces, but through subversion and terrorism, just as what happened in Cuba and just as what has happened in Nicaragua, in the applicability of the Rio Treaty today.

So now we have another Cuba in this hemisphere, and it is Nicaragua, and it is clearly led by Marxist-Leninists. What is more, Nicaragua already is a Soviet base. I don't know what all the debate is about. It is a Soviet base.

Now, my understanding is that the leadership here in the Congress, Democratic and Republican leadership, have all agreed that they would not tolerate a Soviet base in Nicaragua. It already exists. I don't know what you are thinking about. And how do I draw this conclusion? I make the comparison with our forward basing in NATO. All of you understand NATO far more than you understand the Rio Treaty and what is going on in this hemisphere.

But remember, we do not keep all our forces over there. I was involved with operational forces that were here in the United States, and then when there are periods of heightened political tensions, those forces deploy—Army forces and Air Force forces—and those deployments take place almost every summer in training. And where do they go? They go to bases that have been prepared. In other words, the logistics are set up, the infrastructure is there, the weapons are there, the ammunition is there, all the supplies are there.

What do you think we have in Nicaragua? This is exactly what the Soviets have developed. They have improved all the facilities to take the best of jet fighters. They have improved the facilities there—they developed it from scratch—with the deepest, hardest concrete runway in all of Central America, and it will take the heaviest Soviet bomber. That was not built for jumbo jets. It was built for Soviet bombers.

So all this talk about "Oh, Nicaragua is not interested in being a satellite of the Soviets," that is their greatest concern—well, that has to be one of the most absurd statements ever made. With the number of Communists from all over the Communist world in that country, running their security system, helping with their military, the thousands of Cubans, the thousands of East Germans, Bulgarians, Czechoslovakians, North Vietnamese—or, rather, Vietnamese now, I guess it is—and North Koreans, of course they have been taken over by the Communist world.

All right. So what are we doing here? Well, what we are doing——

Senator DODD. Colonel, may I ask you to summarize?

Colonel DICKENS. I will finish with this statement, Senator, and please forgive me if I go on, but we sat here for 2½ hours, and I have spent at least the last 2 years preparing for this opportunity. And we have listened to 2½ hours of comments that I think in many cases are just absurd, absolutely absurd, because they do not address——

Senator DODD. Colonel, I just want to be fair to everyone here.

Colonel DICKENS. May I make the final statement?

Senator DODD. Absolutely.

Colonel DICKENS. This Congress with their statements of not allowing Nicaragua to become a Soviet base when it already is, are leaving the decision to Nicaragua becoming an operational base to the Soviet Union. And what does it take? It takes a decision of the Soviet Union and a 45-minute jet flight of the Soviet Bear bombers that are now based in Cuba, the MIG–23's based in Cuba, flown by—and have been flown by—Soviets, by Cubans, by Nicaraguas, and 45 minutes later they are there.

Now, what kind of a problem does that present to us? It would be the first time since the Cuban missile crisis when the United States and the Soviets would have a head-to-head confrontation. All of us are old enough to remember in 1962 what the strategic relationship was between the United States and the Soviet Union. We were overwhelmingly ahead strategically of the Soviet Union. It is debated today.

There are many Americans, many people that study this very carefully and wonder whether strategically the Soviet Union is now superior to us.

So what I am saying is, if we miscalculate, if this Congress continues to send the wrong signals to the Soviet Union—in other words, one of weakness, of not demonstrating any national will, of not supporting the determination of a strong President—we are signaling to them that we won't act. And if they misinterpret us, if they make that deployment—and remember, that deployment could be tomorrow, it could be 6 years from now with a weaker President—but they made and prepared those bases to deploy. And they have the decisionmaking capability.

Will we react? That is why I am here today. I don't want this Nation to have to face the decision that once they deploy, that a President of the United States has to ask his advisers, ". . . are we going to destroy the Soviet equipment, the aircraft, the bombers—the Blinders, the Bears—the MIG's?" Are we going to begin World War III as a result of our lack of will over the period of years when the Soviets would have clearly backed down, if they had seen determination from this country over Central America?

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Dickens may be found in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Colonel.

Senator Helms.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Chairman, I have several questions I would like to file, and if the three gentlemen would agree to respond in writing, that will save all of us some time.

I do have three questions I want to ask of each of you.

The first one—and you can answer yes or no—would you be in favor of breaking diplomatic relations with Nicaragua?

General SCHWEITZER. Yes.

Colonel DICKENS. Absolutely.

Professor SHARPE. Absolutely not.

Senator HELMS. Now, both of the two military gentlemen, having had extensive experience in Latin America, I want to ask each of them, do you believe that a military solution can be achieved in Nicaragua?

General SCHWEITZER. It is being achieved by the Sandinistas, so it certainly can be achieved.

Senator HELMS. Colonel Dickens.

Colonel DICKENS. Well, you do things not just with purely military solutions or purely political solutions. It is a combination of everything that you have to accomplish, that you want.

Of course, one could impose a military solution from the United States with the problems that would result from that. That is why it is best to support the Contras and allow the Contras to help liberate their own country.

Senator HELMS. This will be a yes or no, Mr. Chairman.

Should the United States sign a Contadora agreement?

General SCHWEITZER. These are hard to answer just with a yes or no. I worked for the last 7 years to support the Contadoras agreement, Senator Helms, but I would say despite all those years of support, it would now be a mistake to sign the agreement because the agreement is not either verifiable or enforceable, and that is really the key—is that last one—to any agreement. Nor are the Sandinistas serious or honest in negotiating, nor do we have a current draft that would provide peace, justice, reform, and democracy for any of the countries in Central America.

Your friend General Noriega said the Contadora process had failed the last time I spoke to him.

Senator HELMS. Do you agree with that?

Colonel DICKENS. Well, of course, it has failed and the wonder is in the meetings I have been in with Latin Americans in El Salvador—and then in Costa Rica last year—that all the Latin Americans know that the Contadora process is useless, and yet no one in the United States does because no one reads Spanish, and none of those articles are ever published here.

The Contadora process is so flawed, first, because it is the Contadora process, and the countries involved in it. It should be the Inter-American System that should be involved with anything to do with peace in the hemisphere. How can you have a peace treaty that does not involve the United States? We are in the region. We are not excluded from the region.

How can the Contras or the freedom fighters be excluded from a treaty that deeply involves them?

So from the very beginning, the treaty does not involve the actual participants. But there are many other reasons why it is flawed.

Senator HELMS. Now, the final question for all three of you.

Would you be willing, as a predicate to whatever follows, to join in a demand on the Sandinista regime that it live up and fulfill the promise that it made, the pledge that it made, that free and fair elections would be held?

Are you willing to join in that demand?

General SCHWEITZER. Yes, sir. I did not understand the first part of the question because I don't think I heard it.

Senator HELMS. I just said would you be willing to join in a demand that before we do anything else, that they live up to the very clear, very firm commitment that they made at the outset when they snookered the American taxpayers for two appropriations totaling about $150 million; that they at least have the decency to call for the full free and fair elections?

Do you agree to that?

General SCHWEITZER. Yes, sir. That is part of the policy, one of the four points, and that is what we failed to elicit from the Sandinista regime since 1979. They broke their promises to the OAS and because they have broken them, they have broken important articles in the U.N. Charter and the OAS Charter, which would be the basis for my saying we ought to break relations with them now.

Senator HELMS. Do you agree with that, Colonel Dickens?

Colonel DICKENS. Not entirely. Certainly the first thing that one ought to do is that the Organization of American States should hold them accountable for the broken promises to the OAS back in June 1979. I mean that is basic.

But how can we ever expect Communists to do other than make false promises? So I have difficulties. You hold them to promises that all of us know they would never keep. So how do you hold them to the promise?

Senator HELMS. It is a journey of 1,000 miles, and you have to start with a step.

Colonel DICKENS. Certainly we should go through the process. But then I want to know about the promises that the American people made, and the entire Inter-American System made, to the Rio Treaty? How is that we are selective in what treaties we like?

Oh, we like SALT II. We are going to bring back SALT II, even though it has expired and never was approved by the Senate, and now we are going to vote on it. We like the Panama Canal treaties. I don't know which treaties we like. Oh, the ABM Treaty. We like that treaty, even though there are aspects of that treaty viewed today, that strongly suggest it should not still be in effect.

So, I would say what about us keeping our promises in the Rio Treaty? We said we would not support another Cuba. There is another Cuba.

Senator HELMS. You are absolutely right.

Would you agree about demanding an election?

Professor SHARPE. I would say two things about that. I think that that is a legitimate demand for the United States to make, but to demand it as a precondition for negotiating on security questions is shooting ourselves in the foot.

The second point I would make is that before I agree to make that kind of demand, I would want to see what other Members of Congress would join me in making similar kinds of demands on other countries such as South Africa and Chile in terms of their changing the character of their internal regimes before we went ahead with other kinds of diplomatic, economic, and security agreements with them.

Senator HELMS. I would be glad to discuss or debate some of the other countries. But we are talking about our own hemisphere right now and we are talking about a Communist takeover of Central America.

But anytime you wish to discuss, for example, Chile and their electoral process, their constitution, which was approved by 67 percent of the people that went to the polls, I will meet you right in the middle of the floor and we will talk about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Senator Helms.

Very briefly, I may not have understood the response, General and Colonel. You both have extensive military backgrounds and experience and have dealt, apparently for some time, with military people in the region. On my recent visit speaking with military people in each one of the five Central American countries, I asked the same question in four—with the exception of Nicaragua: What is the military potential or capacity of the Contra forces in a purely military sense?

With the exception of one senior officer, the judgment was not a very positive one. Now, obviously, the question of how long they get help, training, and so forth surely has something to do with the response. No one is suggesting that forever they would not be capable. But at least in the foreseeable future, as a general consensus, the Contras as a military force would not pose any significant military threat against the Sandinistas.

Do you agree or disagree with that conclusion?

General SCHWEITZER. Senator Dodd, we are grateful that you asked the question again because it is not one that you can answer with a yes or no. I had to do it before, so I am grateful that you gave me a chance to explain it.

When you talk about Vietnam or Vietnamization of the war, those words came never from anybody in Washington, because there is not going to be another Vietnam in Nicaragua in the sense that people in the United States would think of it. That term came from Bayardo Arce, who said it is our purpose to Vietnamize the war, their director of policy, one of the nine commandantes.

And what he meant by it was to start the parallel hierarchies, export the war, expand it through subversion. That is one of the lessons of Vietnan that has been learned throughout the world, and very successfully by Communist guerrillas.

So, in that sense, you can indeed have the military solution and they are well on their way to doing it. They made a pause after our assistance from the United States to the democratic opposition to consolidate their rule in Nicaragua before expanding further.

The Contras, Senator Dodd, under the best of circumstances, could not be at their present strength—or even if it were to double—a force capable of overthrowing the regime. But the importance is that with that force in the field—and it is the only legitimate way that you can express opposition to a totalitarian dictatorship—and I would have to disagree with the professor if he says it is not one.

With the other forces that are in the region, you have the potential to reinforce and assist the Contras. What should be happening is the other nations in the regions should come to the assistance of the Contras, and they will if we don't abandon them on the battlefield now. But they cannot do it alone.

Senator DODD. Colonel.

Colonel DICKENS. We have to remember what has happened historically. You know, Fidel Castro did not defeat Batista's army in Cuba. And the Sandinistas did not defeat the national guard in Nicaragua. They were defeated by a coalition of forces, and the most important was—and I am talking about Nicaragua—was the United States, the role that the United States played in pulling the rug out from under Somoza and insisting that Israel cut off their military supplies and ammunition, the last country that was providing aid to Somoza.

So, we had all these different countries that came together with support from the Organization of American States.

Senator DODD. Let me just interrupt you. It is your conclusion that, had the United States continued to militarily support Somoza, and had the Israelis continued that support, that Somoza would have prevailed.

Colonel DICKENS. We could have influenced the change, rather than precipitate it by cutting them off on aid from the basis of human rights violations. We lost all ability to influence peaceful change with Somoza with the actions that we took.

There is no point in going back historically for 10 or 20 years, as to what we should have been doing. But I think we were involved in Vietnam and a few other places in the world and probably no one in the State Department that worked in inter-American affairs could get anyone's attention to bring about more rapid or peaceful change.

But getting back to the Contras themselves, the freedom fighters, they are well-disciplined, they are well-trained. I know their leader very well. They are a highly disciplined outfit and they can present tremendous difficulties as a guerrilla force to the Sandinistas.

But look at what has happened. The Soviets have moved in 35 MI–8/17 HIP helicopters which are primarily for troop transport, but they can also be used for gunfighter or gunships, but also 12 of the HIND's. And the HIND is the most sophisticated attack helicopter in the world. So when people say "Oh, they have got to hold a town or they have got to hold a city," that is like committing suicide. Guerrillas don't hold places, not until other changes have come about internally in the country, and the country in its discipline and in its political process and its control starts to fall apart. That is when you start controlling things.

But let us not forget, too, that the Soviets have been flying reconnaissance missions with Soviet pilots, so they can detect and analyze and determine where all these places are that are best operating areas for the Contras. They have four major radar control sites throughout the country, so with radar and an exact target location, they can direct those helicopters to specific points in order to engage the Contras.

And even if the Russians were not helping with the reconnaissance, as soon as there is some kind of a firefight, obviously with helicopters, you can get there in a hurry.

So in support of General Schweitzer, in a guerrilla war like this, it is all the forces which have to be employed. Why shouldn't we be involved in the same thing that helped bring the Sandinistas to power? In other words, breaking diplomatic relations, working with the Central American countries that are most concerned, getting greater involvement of the Central American Defense Treaty group. Some of those countries could be involved in helping to train some of the Contras.

We should launch a major diplomatic initiative in the Organization of American States to make them keep the promises which they will never keep, and if they do not keep them, then we should say that they are no longer the legitimate government of Nicaragua. We gave you recognition: We withdraw it because you have not met the commitments of that recognition.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Colonel.

Professor Sharpe, I wonder if you might comment on the efforts at Manzanillo. You are familiar, obviously, with the effort there. In your assessment, why did Manzanillo fall apart in the end?

Professor SHARPE. Senator Dodd, I think the crucial element in the failure of those talks and indeed the failure of a number of earlier attempts, has to do with the sticking point about democratization.

Let me preface the remark by saying there are a number of very particular and serious issues that are contested when the Contadora and Central American countries get together. For example, the long debates that were had about what agreements they would make on the force levels, how many military units would be allowed in each country, what kind of foreign advisers, what kind of foreign weaponry. There is a lot of debate.

There is a lot of debate about verification which I think, by the way, is a bogus issue. We don't have any trouble, I should say, verifying now all the information that both the general and the colonel have put forward to us. We do have the means of verification. So there are a number of very technical details that keep getting battered back and forth.

But the prime issue is that the Contadora countries do not want to reopen the question of the internal political arrangements in Nicaragua. They were more or less settled in a compromise fashion in which basically there is a call for a change, but the Contadora countries are not willing to sacrifice the other agreements in order to force that kind of change.

The United States does not want an agreement that does not include a change in the internal character of the government, and the United States has been working very closely with countries who are very dependent on its economic influence, particularly Honduras and El Salvador, secondarily, Guatemala and Costa Rica, to make sure that by hook or by crook, those agreements do not get off the ground.

Let me conclude by saying that I also find it quite amazing, even given the pressure the United States has brought to bear on the four Central American countries, not to sign a Contadora agreement; that there have been a number of very courageous acts taken by a number of leaders of those countries in face of the U.S. position, which I think we ought to keep in mind.

For example, the President of Costa Rica, calling for the cutoff of Contra aid. I think it is maybe no accident that the current administration ESF request for Costa Rica for fiscal year 1988 is down from last year. That may be a direct result of that. I think it was a brave move on the part of the president of Guatemala to call for regional talks back last year in the face of such U.S. opposition. And here you have President Escona and some of his generals going to the U.S. Embassy and saying, "Listen, we want the Contras across the border in Nicaragua, out of Honduras as quickly as possible. We are worried about the monster that is being created."

Those are very difficult things for those countries to say, and I think they indicate—and here is my conclusion—that if the United States threw its full support behind the kind of approach that Ambassador Linowitz was suggesting, that those Central American countries would probably breathe a sigh of relief and throw their support, too. As long the United States continues to insist on the internal changes as a precondition to that kind of settlement, there will be no Contadora, and people will smugly point to the failure of a Contadora process that the United States itself has helped undermine.

Senator DODD. I thank you.

Colonel DICKENS. May I make a comment about Costa Rica, please?

Senator DODD. Certainly, Colonel.

Colonel DICKENS. I was in Costa Rica just a few months ago, attending a meeting, and I talked with the top security official, not the political appointee, but the top security official of Costa Rica.

They are very concerned about the Nicaraguan military capabilities. You know, they only have an 8,000 security force. It is highly trained. It has been developed by our forces in its training, and they are highly capable. But nevertheless, they are 8,000.

All the Costa Ricans are scared to death of Nicaragua. The President of Costa Rica's comments reflect the intimidation and in not having the confidence that the United States is really committed to their own security, short of them being physically invaded. All the Costa Ricans that I talked to, when they saw that I was an American and speaking Spanish, would say, "When is the United States going to invade?" Which, you know, it sort of shocked me.

I said, "You really don't understand the political process in the United States. That is really why we are helping the Contras to put that pressure on and develop that support." They then said, "Oh, but when are you going to invade?"

So I think when you just take the president's statements—and this was a number of months ago—he has changed in his attitude since then—whether one could say it is from pressure from the United States or whether it is pressure from the Honduran president—and, look, the Honduran president has just changed in the comments that he has made recently to the Contadora group.

So there is a changing situation that you have to look at.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much.

Other members of the committee may have questions for the three of you which they will submit in writing to you. I appreciate, and I know the committee does, your presence here this morning on short notice and in bad weather. So we thank you for coming here.

I would announce as well that the scheduled hearings for tomorrow have been postponed. It will be scheduled at a later date. I would also include in the record a piece this morning in the Washington Times, or yesterday, having to do with Arturo Cruz and the possibility that he may be leaving the political organization UNO.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Senator DODD. At any rate, this committee will stand in recess until the call of the Chair. We thank you for being here this morning.

[Whereupon, at 1:24 p.m. the hearing was adjourned.]

UNITED STATES POLICY OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NICARAGUA AND AID TO THE CONTRAS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1987

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Claiborne Pell (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Pell, Biden, Sarbanes, Dodd, Kerry, Sanford, Moynihan, Helms, Lugar, Boschwitz, Pressler, Trible, and McConnell.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee on Foreign Relations will come to order.

I would like to welcome Assistant Secretary Abrams and Ambassador Habib who are here this morning for the second day of the Foreign Relations Committee's consideration of United States policy toward Nicaragua.

This hearing is one of the first items of business in the session and underlines the importance our committee and the Congress attaches to this issue.

Mr. Abrams and Ambassador Habib are well aware of my own opposition to the administration's policy on Nicaragua, particularly its support for the Contras.

In my judgment, the military strategy represented by the Contras is headed for disastrous results, which offer the stark prospect of deepening U.S. military involvement.

Meanwhile, the Contra military leadership, still heavily influenced by Somocista elements, is not willing to allow democratic civilian supremacy. And, according to recent reports from Amnesty International and other respected organizations, human rights abuses still continue.

Moreover, despite the administration's efforts to forge Contra unity under UNO, it remains in a state of disarray, a fact dramatically underscored by the unconcealed disaffection of the very respected, and known to many of us, Arturo Cruz.

We need an alternative to this policy. We need a policy that has peace as its fundamental aim. We need to redirect our policy toward exploring every political and diplomatic path available, which I frankly do not believe the present administration has done.

I respect Ambassador Habib and support his diplomatic efforts. But I do not believe he always enjoys the full support of the entire administration.

With such support, I believe that a satisfactory Contadora treaty would have been forged and signed long ago.

Last Wednesday, we heard from Senators Dodd and Weicker, who presented S. 184, an interesting alternative that would refocus U.S. policy toward a diplomatic and political solution. Subsequently, Ambassador Linowitz and other witnesses offered views on that proposal, as well as on current policy.

Today, we have the opportunity to hear from two of the key players involved in our policy, both men known to this committee, respected, and admired.

I would ask Secretary Abrams if he wants to commence with his opening statement.

But first, Senator McConnell, do you have an opening statement?

Senator McConnell. No, Mr. Chairman. I do not have an opening statement.

I am looking forward to hearing from the witnesses.

The Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. Abrams.

STATEMENT OF HON. ELLIOTT ABRAMS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. Abrams. Thank you.

I would like to insert my full statement for the record, Mr. Chairman, and make some briefer opening comments.

The Chairman. Without objection, it will be inserted into the record as if read.

Mr. Abrams. Thank you.

I am grateful for this opportunity to appear here today and discuss U.S. policy and objectives in Central America.

It is easy to state what our objectives are: Regional peace; economic development; and the expansion of democracy. And great progress has been made in economic reforms and in the development of democracy, and in diplomatic cooperation among Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Guatemala. But not in Nicaragua, and that is the problem we face today: How to achieve democratic development in Nicaragua?

Why?

Why should that be our goal? Because there will be no peace in Central America without it.

You have before you legislation that abandons that goal. In the name of peace, it abandons any hope for peace by giving up on democracy. It tells the people of Nicaragua, welcome to the gulag, because that is your future.

Let me quote from remarks of President Arias of Costa Rica:

> It would cause me great sorrow if, because of what has happened in the United States, the so-called Irangate, aid to the Contras is terminated, and nothing more; that this results in allowing the Sandinista regime to consolidate, to not change, to not yield, to not compromise, and everything remains the same. I would say to you that to me, as a Costa Rican, it would cause great regret, and I believe that it would hurt the Nicaraguan people much more than me, because they have fought so hard to get rid of one tyrant, one dictator, and 7 years later, they have nine.

> If this scandal results only in Congress not approving more military aid and leaves matters in Nicaragua as they are, I think it would be regretted by the Contadora group, the support group, by the other Central American nations, by the whole world because, let's not fool ourselves, although the world does not support the war, this doesn't mean it concurs in the status quo in Nicaragua. There is a distinction between not concurring in a military outcome but wanting important changes in the Managua regime.

Important changes in the Managua regime are essential, and only pressure will produce them.

The debate over who the Sandinistas are is over. We know who they are, and we know they believe deeply in a Leninist system, a Cuban model, and will never permit freedom of speech, of the press, in elections, or the church, or leave their neighbors alone if left to their own devices.

Frankly, I believe that pressure is what prevents their total consolidation of power, and, thus, pressure keeps the internal resistance alive, keeps alive the possibility of a non-Communist outcome, and keeps the diplomatic track alive. In this sense, the Contras keep the Contadora process alive, because, without the Contras, the Sandinistas have simply too little incentive to negotiate.

We continue to back the 21 objectives of Contadora, which include democracy.

Let me just read a passage from the Kissinger Commission report on why democracy is essential for peace.

This is page 114 of the Kissinger Commission report:

> The consolidation of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Managua would be seen by its neighbors as constituting a permanent security threat. Because of its secretive nature, the existence of a political order on the Cuban model in Nicaragua would pose major difficulties in negotiating, implementing, and verifying any Sandinista commitment to refrain from supporting insurgency and subversion in other countries. In this sense, the development of an open political system in Nicaragua, with a free press and an active opposition, would provide an important security guarantee for the other countries of the region, and would be a key element in any negotiated settlement.

As a broad generality, we do not believe that it would be wise to dismantle existing incentives and pressures on the Managua regime, except in conjunction with a demonstrable progress on the negotiating front.

Our support for the resistance is a crucial part of a strategy aimed at securing democracy in the region and securing peace. The diplomatic track has the same goals. And let us be clear on that. The purpose of our diplomacy is, and must be, to attain peace and democracy, not to accept communism in Nicaragua and call it peace in the region.

Such a result means political slavery for Nicaraguans and permanent insecurity for the Sandinistas' neighbors.

On October 18, 3½ months ago, Congress approved aid to the resistance. That aid actually began to flow about 10 weeks ago. In that period, thousands of young Nicaraguans have jumped at the chance to return to their country to fight to liberate it.

This very day they are risking their lives, and some of them will lose their lives. All they ask is a chance to prove themselves. To aid their efforts to fight for 10 weeks and then cut them off and abandon them seems, to me, immoral and wrong, and against our national security interests, and certain to produce upheaval in Central America. It is not the road to peace.

To abandon democracy in Nicaragua is the Devil's bargain. It will never bring the region peace to agree to the building of another Cuba there.

Let us, instead, stand fast, stand behind this new program, stand behind those fighting to liberate their country, stand for democracy in Nicaragua as we are for it and have worked for it in Honduras and El Salvador and Guatemala.

That, I submit, is the road to a real, lasting settlement, that will bring peace and democracy to Central America.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Abrams may be found in the appendix.]

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Abrams.

Ambassador Habib.

STATEMENT OF HON. PHILIP C. HABIB, SPECIAL ENVOY FOR CENTRAL AMERICA, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador HABIB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am very pleased to be here to testify today. Thank you for your kind remarks.

I have submitted a formal statement for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be inserted in the record as if read.

Ambassador HABIB. I will read some extracts of some of the points just to set the framework for what I have to say.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Ambassador HABIB. We believe there should be a negotiating process for every conflict. In Central America, it should be clear by now that negotiations that produce a democratic outcome in Nicaragua offer the best hope for peace in the region. The Contadora process has acknowledged this essential principle, and we have supported its negotiating efforts.

The Contadora process began in January 1983, when Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela formed the Contadora Group to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict in Central America.

In September of that year, they and the five Central American countries produced the Document of Objectives. This document represents the essence of Contadora. It contains 21 points essential to a just and durable peace.

For over 3 years, the Contadora process has sought a formula for accomplishing these 21 objectives. Several draft agreements or "actas" have been tabled, and through lengthy negotiations, much of the language has been accepted by all five of the Central American countries.

However, several critical points remain unresolved.

In 1985, with the process apparently deadlocked, four South American nations—Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay—formed the Support Group in an effort to revitalize the negotiations.

Contadora is an all-Latin process that now includes the largest Latin American nations; these are important countries, and people listen when they speak.

This is an encouraging development, since it shows Latin American nations coming to grips with hemispheric problems.

Contadora seeks a comprehensive, regional approach to the problems in Central America. The 21 points of the Document of Objectives cover the full range of political, security, military, and economic issues which must be taken into account to resolve the conflict in Central America. They specifically include the need for national reconciliation and democratization, which are the keys to lasting peace.

The United States has consistently supported the Contadora process. We believe that this regional approach is the only way to produce a durable solution in the present circumstances.

Our objectives in Nicaragua, which Assistant Secretary Abrams has just described to you, are fully consistent with the 21 points. We would welcome and we would support an agreement that achieved the comprehensive, verifiable, and simultaneous implementation of the Document of Objectives.

Since Contadora has been acting in this regard, they have produced three draft actas, none of them complete in itself. There have been some objections to them raised by the Central American countries themselves. In fact, I would say the most recent draft of last June—June 1986—has led to a response on the part particularly of the Central American democracies, who have found in the draft agreement a number of discrepancies with both the 21 objectives and with their own views as to what would bring a just and durable peace to the area.

In particular, the draft agreements to date have failed to provide for an adequate verification system, they have failed to meet the criteria of simultaneity, in the sense that some of the critical elements are left for later negotiation, and they have not been sufficiently complete and comprehensive, particularly in regard to certain military requirements and, above all, to the requirement for democracy and pluralization.

So, at the present time, then, we have found that, after a period of dormancy, Contadora revived itself or has attempted to revive itself, most recently in the visit of the eight Contadora members, that is, the Contadora Group and the Support Group, the Foreign Ministers, and the two Secretaries General of the Organization of American States and the United Nations, who accompanied them, to the region, an obvious and welcome attempt to revive the Contadora process.

Out of that visit I would hope would come not only a revival of negotiation, but an attempt to deal with the deficiencies of the previous draft agreements.

Unfortunately, the Sandinistas have remained intransigent. The communique they issued during the Contadora visit demonstrated their desire for a piecemeal, bilateral approach, which would relieve them of the obligations of a comprehensive, verifiable, and simultaneous Contadora settlement.

They called for talks with the United States, Honduras, and Costa Rica, as if those could really get to the root of the problem. They refused to withdraw their cases at the World Court against Costa Rica and Honduras so that the negotiations could resume.

Most importantly, they showed no signs that they were willing to enter into a dialog with their own people.

The United States stands ready to cooperate with Contadora and the Central American democracies, and to do what it can to support the negotiating process.

In 1984, my predecessor conducted nine rounds of bilateral talks with the Sandinistas at the request of Contadora. We suspended those talks when it became clear that the Sandinistas were attempting to use them not to complement Contadora, but to replace it.

Essentially, they sought a bilateral accord with the United States which would resolve their most pressing problems and leave them free to walk away from Contadora, the commitments they would be required to make in order to fulfill the Document of Objectives, and ultimately the commitments to democracy to Nicaragua's people that they made in 1979.

We have stated that we are ready to resume bilateral talks as soon as the Sandinistas engage in a dialog with all elements of their opposition, including the democratic resistance.

We view our position as an incentive for the Sandinistas to enter into a process of national reconciliation.

The Sandinistas try to convince all who will still listen that the conflict is a bilateral one between Nicaragua and the United States. Fewer and fewer people are buying this line, however, as they come to realize that the real problem is between the Sandinista regime and its own people, and between Nicaragua and its democratic neighbors.

We believe that, until the Sandinistas are ready to come to terms with their own people, there is nothing to be gained in bilateral talks.

Since becoming the President's Special Envoy last March, I have made 10 trips to the region. I have made clear that the United States maintains the negotiating half of its two-track policy. We want a good agreement, not a half-baked solution, that will merely lead to more conflict in the future.

Like the Central American democracies, we reject the piecemeal approach. Like them, we also want a democratic outcome.

I might say, parenthetically, Mr. Chairman, that as far as the support that I have received within the administration, I can assure you that I am fully supported by the President, the Secretary of State, and everything that goes with that, and that is the administration's policy.

So, whatever one may hear about, as you characterize it, a lack of enthusiasm for some of my efforts, that enthusiasm is not lacking in the State Department or in the White House.

Last month, I visited five of the Contadora and Support Group capitals and explained that we welcome their efforts to revive the negotiating process. I urged them to listen closely to the Central American democracies, who are the ones most familiar with the realities of the region, and with whom they have much more in common than Sandinista Nicaragua. We hope that they are listening and that the views of the Central American democracies are given the consideration they clearly deserve.

Even as pressure on the Sandinistas mounts through our aid to the democratic resistance, the door to peace is left open. It is up to the Sandinistas to walk through that door, and if that door is labeled "Contadora," all the better in terms of bringing to bear Latin American presence and influence in the process.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Habib may be found in the appendix.]

The Chairman. Thank you very much, indeed, Ambassador Habib.

I think we will have a 10-minute rule, and I will start out with my questions now.

First I would ask this of Mr. Abrams.

When is the President planning to submit the determination that would begin the process of releasing the $40 million that remains?

Mr. Abrams. My understanding is that we cannot do so until February 19, and I think most likely we'll do it on February 19.

The Chairman. Thank you very much, indeed.

Now I would like to touch on the question of bilateral talks. I am not sure if this would be more in Secretary Abrams' or Ambassador Habib's court.

Ambassador Habib. We can go in tandem, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. All right.

From the viewpoint of the Nicaraguans, they are having a security problem of their own. I think we will all recognize that.

Why will we not engage in direct discussions with the Nicaraguans, even if they still have to defend themselves from the so-called Contras?

Ambassador Habib. The way I approach the problem of bilateral negotiations is I think it serves the Sandinista purpose of trying to establish this conflict as a conflict between the United States and Nicaragua. It is not that at all.

I believe that the framework that has been established for a peaceful resolution and for the dialog with all those that are necessary to that dialog exists. It exists both in Contadora and it certainly exists in the discussions that have been taking place around Contadora.

I think it is important that the Sandinistas realize that they have to deal with their own people, their own opposition, internal and external. After all, they are Nicaraguans, and Nicaraguans have a right to have their views heard in this process.

Obviously, if they are prepared to do that, then whatever bilateral matters are more appropriately dealt in a bilateral framework between Nicaragua and ourselves, we would be quite prepared to do it.

We made it clear that at such time as they are prepared to deal with their opposition, internal and external, and to dialog with them, as they are called, in effect, in principle to do by Contadora, then we would be prepared to meet with them.

But until then, we just don't want to resume the rather fruitless process that took place in the days of my predecessor, in which what we discovered was that they really were not prepared to operate within the Contadora context, but wanted just to settle problems with the United States in the hope that they could then pursue their objectives without having to pay any attention to the international commitments that they had made, the commitments they had made internationally previously, and to the Contadora objectives in and of themselves.

Elliott, you may want to add something.

Mr. Abrams. No; that was fine.

The CHAIRMAN. I am a bit surprised that you, who have such a wonderful track record of dealing with people, do not think it would be advantageous to continue to talk. It reminds me a little bit of what Winston Churchill once said: "That jaw-jaw is better than war-war." What we seem to be implying here is a support for war-war, rather than the jaw-jaw, which never hurts.

Ambassador HABIB. I would look forward to the opportunity to deal with them on bilateral issues. But, first, I think we ought to make it very clear what their responsibilities are in and of themselves.

I see no purpose in weakening, in effect, a peace process by engaging in a bilateral discussion alongside of it.

There is a multilateral framework that exists. There is no question but that multilateral framework covers all of the relevant issues.

I don't want to interfere with that multilateral framework because that is what they tried to do in the Manzanillo talks, as I understand it. They tried to, in effect, set aside the commitments to deal with all of the issues that had to be dealt with and sort of try to make a deal with the United States alone.

The CHAIRMAN. I guess this is where we will have to agree to disagree, because, to my mind, when one is having a hostile relationship with any group, country, or group of countries, the more channels of communication there are, the more conversations, the more jaw-jaw that is going on, the better off it is for the cause of peace.

Ambassador HABIB. Let me point out, Mr. Chairman, that we have an Embassy in Managua and they have an ambassador here. Our Ambassador has access, and he does talk, and they talk to him. He meets from time to time with their people, including some of the Commandantes from the Nine.

The CHAIRMAN. All I know is that their ambassador here called on me yesterday, I think it was, and was very sad and upset because bilateral discussions were not being pursued.

Ambassador HABIB. Yes. They would love to get into bilateral discussions, and then ignore all of the elements that are involved in the larger framework.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me move on to another subject, agreeing to disagree on that.

My definition of "terrorism," state-supported terrorism, is when one nation supports acts of violence to change the policy of another nation. I am sure that we would all agree on that definition.

In what way does the conduct of the Contras differ from those of terrorists?

Mr. ABRAMS. I think I would turn the question around and ask in what way does it differ from that of, let us say, the Afghan rebels. The Afghan rebels are fighting to regain their country; so are the Nicaraguan rebels.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, there is a huge difference. In Afghanistan, the Soviets, the Russian troops are there, and we are cooperating with the Afghans, the freedom fighters, to throw the Russians out.

On the other hand, in Nicaragua, we are combining with elements there to throw the government out. There are no foreigners or strangers there except Americans.

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, that's not really true, Senator.

I think there are, in fact, thousands and thousands of Cuban, Soviet, Czech, Bulgarian, and East German military and security personnel, who constitute, really, part of the backbone of that Communist regime.

The CHAIRMAN. But from a statistical viewpoint, I think you will concur with me. Take the Cubans, for example. The majority of the Cubans who are there are not military, but are civilian Cubans. I wish we had teachers, nurses, and people of that sort down there.

Mr. ABRAMS. I'm not sure I would agree with that.

After Grenada, the Cubans began to change the composition of their presence in Nicaragua. They tend to be young, military-age, able-bodied males with military training.

I don't have the numbers in front of me of how many Cubans are directly engaged in security and military work and how many are not.

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe that could be submitted for the record, if we have those figures.

Mr. ABRAMS. Sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

CUBAN PRESENCE IN NICARAGUA

Current DIA estimates of Cuban presence in Nicaragua are 2,500 military advisors and 3,500 to 4,000 civilian advisors.

The CHAIRMAN. I did not mean to divert you from your response to my question: In what way does their conduct differ from that of what we would call terrorists?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, I don't see that it has anything to do with terrorism whatsoever.

What it has to do with, it seems to me, is the right of a people to rise up in arms against a Communist government which is oppressing it.

This is a Communist group which has no legitimacy. They will not submit themselves to the people of Nicaragua in free elections, sponsored by Contadora or anybody else, because they know they are going to lose.

What you have, in fact, is a reign of terror. There is a reign of terror in Nicaragua. But it is that which, as many human rights groups have pointed out, is being conducted by the government through its jailings, its pressures, its executions, even, of people who refuse to support or give in to the Communist government.

As someone put it, refusing to allow political opposition, what they have done is to produce military opposition.

I think it is very much in line with the right of any people to rise up against oppression.

These are Nicaraguans who are fighting. Let's remember that these are Nicaraguans who are volunteering to risk their lives to try to reclaim their country.

I don't think that is terrorism. I think that is a fight for liberty.

The CHAIRMAN. Maybe it depends on which way you look at it. But to my mind, when the instances that have taken place in Nicaragua, from valid reports I think we can agree on—where buses have been attacked or land mines left in the road, things of that sort—that is indiscriminate violence, it seems to me. You don't know who is going to step on a land mine.

Mr. ABRAMS. I agree with that. I think the land mine thing is a good example.

But one should pursue it.

We know, for example, and the New York Times has recently been reporting in detail about this, about the extensive use of indiscriminate land mining, pressure-detonated land mines by the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador who are fighting President Duarte's government.

We don't know about that in Nicaragua.

I have discussed the question of the use of pressure-detonated land mines with the Contras. What they say is they do not do that. They have command-detonated land mines. They have some pressure-detonated land mines, which they use carefully. And they have stated to me that they are going to alert the people of Nicaragua through the radio, Radio Liberacion, to where those mines are going to be placed.

I do not think that it is fair to say they are using them indiscriminately.

I will give you an example of why I think that.

In some areas of Nicaragua, the government has moved out hundreds of thousands, literally hundreds of thousands of people. These are not the local people who are running away from the Contras. These are people who the Sandinistas know support the Contras, and so they move them out in mass deportations.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

My time has expired.

I would just say for the record that I have been informed that the Pentagon says that 2,500 Cuban military personnel are in Nicaragua. The State Department also says there are 4,000 Cuban civilians.

Senator Helms, the ranking minority member, is recognized.

Senator HELMS. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. We had a prayer breakfast that ran a little long this morning and traffic was very heavy, so I apologize to the committee for being a little tardy.

I would ask, first of all, unanimous consent that a statement that I would have delivered be included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It is so ordered.

[The prepared statement of Senator Helms may be found in the appendix.]

Senator HELMS. Mr. Secretary, let's get down to the nitty-gritty about what we are confronting.

What will happen if we abandon Nicaragua to the Communists? I don't mean just the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, but I am talking about the main supporters of the Sandinistas, Cuba, and the Soviet Union.

Mr. ABRAMS. I think there are two elements there. The first is what happens in Nicaragua. The second is what happens around it.

In Nicaragua, of course, by definition, you then have a Soviet- or Cuban-style dictatorship permanently ensconced. And so, you have a people which is going to live under communism, presumably forever. You abandon them and just say to them that's it, that's your future, communism is your future.

And to all those who do not wish to live under communism, of course, they will leave. They will try to leave, and if the borders are open, they will leave. And you will have the problem of refugee flows as well.

That is within Nicaragua.

Then the question becomes what about around Nicaragua. What about the surrounding countries?

I do not believe that it is possible for democracy to survive in those countries with a permanently ensconced Communist regime linked to the Soviets and the Cubans in Managua.

I would commend again to your attention the Kissinger Commission report, which essentially I think said the same thing; that is, that containment in Central America is a very tough proposition—a very tough proposition.

What is it that we would do? Would we double the size of the military and double our military aid to, say, Honduras and El Salvador? And what is the impact upon democracy in those countries of building, and building, and building the military machine? Would we put American troops there?

In the classical containment on the Korean model, we have troops there 35 years later. Is that what we want to do?

These countries are not strong. In the case of Costa Rica, they have no army—none. What are they going to do in the face of this military machine, which is, of course, now triumphant. Under this scenario, they have beaten the Americans. The Americans have gone home.

What does it do for the morale of the FMLN, the Communist guerrillas in El Salvador?

What does it do for the arms flows that are likely to come in?

I think it is a formula, and, again, I would have to say that the Kissinger Commission thought it is a formula for permanent instability and conflict in Central America.

Senator **Helms**. I certainly agree with you.

On Tuesday of this week, the immediate past president of Costa Rica, President Monge, came to my office and asked to meet with me about the situation in Nicaragua.

I was planning to ask him some questions, but I did not have to ask him the questions, Mr. Secretary. He volunteered with emphasis and grave concern that the people of Costa Rica are gravely apprehensive that the U.S. Congress is not decisively in support of the anti-Communist movement in Nicaragua.

Then he said we have no formed forces, which you have just stated. Costa Rica has no way to stop the Sandinista aggression into its territory.

He explained that his country now has more than 200,000 Nicaraguan refugees who fled to Costa Rica seeking freedom.

You may have covered all of this in your statement. I don't know whether you did or not.

Mr. **Abrams**. No.

Senator **Helms**. But these are the kinds of things, if I may say so, that the news media of the United States are not conveying to the American people. Neither do the American people know the absolute certain impact of the increased tidal wave of refugees that is going to pour over our borders. We don't hear anything about that anymore.

We think it is bad enough now. But you wait until Central America falls into the Soviet hands, because that is what we are talking about. Then you are really going to see a deluge, and it is absolutely going to frustrate that entire region, where the refugees are now coming in and will come in. But also the rest of the United States.

So, I guess what I am saying to you is that it is not merely a matter of strategic interest to the United States to make sure that we do everything we can to help the freedom fighters, who don't want us to come in with troops. But what some of my dear colleagues are proposing is guaranteeing that somewhere down the line, American troops will be sent in because of their failure to support the freedom fighters today.

Now, I think we have a moral obligation in addition to a strategic obligation.

Do you agree with that?

Mr. **Abrams**. I do.

Senator **Helms**. Well, can we just forget about internal change? How does it affect the United States if we just forget about internal change?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, there isn't any better answer. So I want to just read, if I could, four sentences from the Kissinger Commission report, which says what about forgetting about a settlement that has democracy in it.

> Theoretically, the United States and its friends could abandon any hope of such a settlement and simply try to contain a Nicaragua which continued to receive military supplies on the present scale. In practical terms, however, such a course would present major difficulties. In the absence of a political settlement, there would be little incentive for the Sandinistas to act responsibly, even over a period of time, and much inducement to escalate their efforts to subvert Nicaragua's neighbors. To contain the export of revolution would require a level of vigilance and sustained effort that would be difficult for Nicaragua's neighbors and even for the United States.

Skipping, "We would then face the prospect over time of the collapse of the other countries of Central America——

Senator **Helms**. Exactly.

Mr. **Abrams** [continuing]. "Bringing with it the spectre of Marxist domination of the entire region and thus the danger of a larger war." Page 114 of the Kissinger Commission report.

Senator **Helms**. Anybody who doesn't see what the prospects are needs to go to an eye doctor.

Now, I hope we won't continue this business, and it is a sorry business, of abandoning our friends as we have done in the past. We have abandoned them in Asia. I never will forget all of the niceties that I heard about well, we must get out of Vietnam and Cambodia and let them have their own government and so forth, Laos and Vietnam, and look at what happened. I don't have to recite about the boat people. I would hope that some people remember what the prospects of that would be in this case.

I am asking you—and I don't mean it to be a leading question, but I think it ought to be made for the record—Is that the position we should take now, that we just concede Nicaragua, concede it to the Communist world, because that is just what we are talking about?

This is not a polo game. This is a fight for the domination of Central America, either by the forces of freedom or by the Soviet Union.

I don't think we can just say "Tough going, fellows, we can't help you any more because this is a highly charged political situation, and we are just going to leave you to swing in the wind."

What about the Nicaraguan resistance? Do you regard them as just a bargaining chip to get a negotiated settlement? Or should they be allowed to pursue the path of freedom without restraint from the United States?

Mr. **Abrams**. A policy which used them as a bargaining chip to get a settlement which did not bring democracy in Nicaragua would really be immoral, because we would, in that circumstance, be sending or helping to send 17-, 18-, or 19-year-old boys to die as bargaining chips. That is an immoral policy.

If we can get an outcome that brings democracy so that they can go home and live their lives as Nicaraguans in a free Nicaragua, that is worth their fighting for, and that is what they are willing to fight for.

But if it is a bargaining chip to get some kind of settlement that we then walk away from and abandon Nicaragua permanently, I think that is an immoral policy.

Senator **Helms**. I agree. My time is up.

I just wish that some of my colleagues, who disagree with me and others, would explain to me why the Sandinistas have defaulted, reneged on their very clear pledge to have free, fair, and open elections.

Now, they don't even have that good faith. Maybe we could talk about that one of these days.

Mr. Chairman, my time is up.

The **Chairman**. Thank you.

Senator Biden.

Senator **Biden**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask unanimous consent that the short statement that I have be entered into the record, as if read.

The **Chairman**. Without objection.

[Senator Biden's prepared statement may be found in the appendix.]

Senator **Biden**. I would like to answer Senator Helms' question. It's because they are not good guys.

Senator **Helms**. Who are not good guys?

Senator **Biden**. The Sandinistas. There is very little social redeeming value to the Sandinistas.

But let me get to talking about how we come up with a policy that makes any sense because I believe this policy is bankrupt. That should come as no shock to you, I know.

According to Gen. Paul Gorman, the former Commander of the U.S. Military Forces in Central America, the Contras cannot defeat the Sandinista army. In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee last week, he stated that the $100 million approved by Congress last year is "not going to do it. The money you are going to be asked to spend this year isn't going to do it."

Now, this is fairly tough testimony, I think, for someone who, until recently, was in charge of America's military presence in

Central America. He has operational experience far beyond any of us, including the witnesses, and he is, to put it mildly, not sanguine about the Contras' prospects.

I would like to ask you what is your assessment of the likelihood of outright military victory. As I understand your answer to Senator Helms' question, it would be immoral to look for anything other than that.

Mr. ABRAMS. No. My answer was that it would be immoral to go for a settlement that does not have democracy in it.

Senator BIDEN. Tell me what you think the prospects are for outright military victory by the Contras.

Mr. ABRAMS. Outright military victory—if you mean Contra tanks rolling into Managua—has never been a part of U.S. policy. What we seek is a political victory, the kind of victory the Sandinistas had, or, for that matter, that Castro had.

Senator BIDEN. Well, the Sandinistas had a victory in which, ultimately, they rolled into Managua.

Mr. ABRAMS. No, no. They didn't have a military victory. They had a political uprising against Somoza, as Castro had against Batista. But it wasn't a military victory. It was not the kind of victory that we had in World War II. That was a pure military victory. We didn't change the minds of the German people. We just won.

That's not what we are talking about in Nicaragua. We are talking about a guerrilla war, and it is the kind of situation, in fact, that the Sandinistas themselves are very familiar with.

Senator BIDEN. But the end result is you have to have Ortega in a speedboat heading West or East; right?

Mr. ABRAMS. No, you don't.

In fact, the Nicaraguan resistance offered a couple of years ago a kind of settlement in which Ortega stays right there, as long as he is willing to open up to democracy, which, as you know, he is not real keen on.

Senator BIDEN. Well you don't have any prospect that that is likely to happen, do you?

After I listened to all of the forthright statements of the Senator from North Carolina and you, Mr. Abrams, and other witnesses, I mean, nobody believes that that is going to happen; do they?

Mr. ABRAMS. No. I would think that that is going too far, and for two reasons. First is because of the map, because of where Nicaragua is; second is because if the policy works, they are going to have their backs against the wall and they will have no other choice.

Senator BIDEN. Well, according to your definition of "winning," how long do you think it will take to win?

Mr. ABRAMS. We hate to be pinned down on time, but I will give you an answer.

I think you are talking about something like 2 to 4 years.

Senator BIDEN. Two to 4 years.

What is your assessment of the efforts to revitalize the Contadora process?

Ambassador HABIB. I think it depends on the definition, first of all, what you call "winning," and what the process involves.

I think it would be quite possible that you could get the kind of agreement that was envisaged in the 21 objectives of Contadora, which would satisfy the Central American democracies and bring about the necessary changes in Nicaragua.

You could get that kind of agreement negotiated. You could get it possibly presented for signature, and it wouldn't take much longer, providing there was the political will to reach that kind of agreement.

The recent visit of the foreign ministers to Central America of Contadora and the Contadora Support Group with the two Secretaries General ended with a statement in which they called attention to the fact that there wasn't political will to reach that kind of agreement.

Now, I might say that if you really examine what is required, the lack of political will exists principally in Nicaragua. If you look at the positions taken by the four democratic presidents and the four democratic Central American countries, you will not only find the political will to reach such an agreement, but they define it very precisely as necessarily including military, economic, and political requirements, and political change.

Senator BIDEN. Ambassador Habib, you know of my great respect for you—and I am not being solicitous. I thought the definition that Mr. Abrams gave of what constituted victory was an accurate one for the administration. "Victory" means that there has to be, hopefully, a negotiated settlement, but a political settlement that is only going to be driven by a military peace. Absent guns and bullets, there is no prospect, according to the administration, of their being a political settlement.

That is correct, isn't it?

Mr. ABRAMS. Right now, that's correct.

Senator BIDEN. Yes.

And what the Sandinistas did in their "nonmilitary" victory, when they took power, is there were 50,000 lives lost to get to that point of the "nonmilitary" victory that they had.

I am just trying to understand the pieces. There seem to be three pieces here.

The first piece is that you need a piston driving the Sandinistas to negotiate. That piston is the Contras. And what drives the fuel to drive that piston is the U.S. Government giving direct financial aid to allow them to plan and to buy the guns and bullets, et cetera, to keep that piston moving.

Ambassador HABIB. That is one cylinder. But there is another cylinder to it.

Senator BIDEN. That is one cylinder. But none of the other cylinders, Ambassador Habib, kick in according to administration policy until that one is running.

Is that not true?

Mr. ABRAMS. No. They are running right now.

Ambassador HABIB. Oh, no. They go at the same time.

There is no inconsistency with having a Contra piston, if you want to so call it, and having at the same time a piston which involves Central American opinion, by and large, political opinion within Nicaragua, the pressure and force of other opinion in Latin America—all of which can and is, to a certain extent, beginning to focus on the necessity for the Sandinistas to wake up to the fact that they have to go for the objectives that they agreed on originally.

So, I would say that this is at least a two-cylinder motor that you are running, and not one.

Senator **Biden**. My point is that the one cylinder, the Contra aid, makes it a great deal more difficult for the second cylinder to function at all.

Ambassador **Habib**. No.

Senator **Biden**. That is where we disagree.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, we disagree there.

Senator Biden: We have a disagreement on that.

I believe that we have so botched this policy, so botched the opportunities to move on the Sandinista Government in a way that puts genuine regional pressure on them, genuine world pressure on them, that I believe we have made their game for them by not being very bright and smart in how we have gone about it.

I just want to make sure that we understand the basis upon which we disagree, and that I understand that the sine qua non to your whole policy requires that military peace, and that you are talking about that bringing about a result, hopefully, in a 2- to 4-year timeframe.

I just think that that is not at all realistic, absent a significant—a significant—change in the amount of aid and what we are willing to back up that aid with.

I see no evidence that that is not correct.

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, I think there is another disagreement.

I think the key line—I must say that I had a long talk with General Gorman some time ago about Central America.

Senator **Biden**. I'll bet you had one afterward, too.

Mr. **Abrams**. No, I haven't. But, you know, I agree with a very great deal of what General Gorman said. One thing that I agree with him on is he hasn't been briefed in 2 years.

You have to remember that he said it, I think, six times in his testimony. He hasn't been briefed on the programming in 2 years.

What General Gorman wants is an unconventional warfare strategy—not a conventional warfare strategy.

What I guess he hasn't found out, and I would be delighted to brief him on—I look forward to doing it—is that is what we have. That is exactly the training that the United States is doing.

So, I agree with General Gorman. A conventional strategy is wrong, wrong, wrong, and that is why we don't want one and we don't have one.

I think, actually, what he wants and what we've got are awfully close together.

Senator **Biden**. My time is about up. I probably have 10 seconds left.

There's the bell. I have no time left.

Let me say that I believe the military option—and I say this sincerely, Mr. Ambassador and Secretary Abrams—the military option, I think, is closing out the possibility of a negotiated solution and sending us down the wrong road, rather than enhancing it.

Ambassador **Habib**. That's not the view that you hear in Central America, Senator, with all respect for the opinion.

On the contrary, lately, particularly, as it looks threatening, as the cutoff looks threatening, we have had more open expressions from our Central American democracies, pointing out the desirability of maintaining both pistons, not just one.

Senator BIDEN. I am not at liberty to respond.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Lugar.

Senator LUGAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It seems to me that Senator Biden's questioning has focused upon a difference of opinion which is an important one.

I would just indicate that I think the administration's policy, the one you have both reiterated this morning, of having the military pressure and the negotiating arm, does fairly express what is a very sophisticated, delicate process in which you hope the people will negotiate and will get into a framework for free and fair elections, a constitution, demilitarization, an end of subversion of the neighbors, and all of this has to occur simultaneously, in a comprehensive manner.

I suspect that I suppose another option that the Senator from Delaware is suggesting is that we attempt to do this without the military. In other words, if you cut off the military aid, as I gather his position is, you are more likely to arrive at a negotiated settlement or at peace in Central America.

I don't think I agree with that. In fact, I can't see how that would be so. But I think it is an important argument to try to delineate.

In the past, most of these arguments have been the administration's policy and people who just want to stop it. We may have a markup today or sometime on legislation by the distinguished Senator from Connecticut who presents an argument that has been presented, as I recall, in each of the Contra debates we have had for several years. Usually there is an amendment that we just stop, that is, cut off everything and see how it goes.

Your testimony is that the way it would go is that the government consolidates itself, there can be argument as to how totalitarian such a government can be in Nicaragua, as opposed to Poland or the Soviet Union, but, nevertheless, you would have a Communist government of sorts with a big army, threats to all the neighbors, subversion of all the rest, and, I think, a general mess.

This would lead, perhaps, to another strategy of containment, which you have suggested is very expensive with regard to American forces, the American Treasury, and perhaps no more supported by the American people than the current policy.

In other words, as I read it, the American people in most polls on this subject are not interested in a Nicaraguan policy, any policy. They are not interested in military assistance, in foreign economic assistance, in development, even in humanitarian assistance.

There is a very great desire in this country to wish that it would all go away, without a penny of expenditure or a single American involved.

I think that we all understand that.

So, whoever is President, Republican or Democrat, has to swim upstream.

It just seems to me, as I have listened to Phil Habib over the course of time, that he makes sense. You have to keep talking. But you have something there in your portfolio or there is not much vitality in the talks.

I can remember the Ambassador coming by to visit just after he returned from the Philippines. The President sent him to Central America. As I recall, you said to me, Ambassador, that you needed a favorable vote in the House and the Senate in order to have some stock in trade even as you move around through the Contadora Group, the Central American democracies, quite apart from the venture into Managua, which you were prepared to do, which the President was prepared to support and would still be able to do.

I said "Well, my question is not so much the problem of the policy, which I think is moving along, but the staying power question." I think our discussion today reflects the dilemma that all of us have thought in a bipartisan way for a long time. How can we get a policy that maybe two-thirds of us in the Senate would support? Having gone through, I suppose, at least 16 votes on substantive issues last year on the floor of the Senate, in which I tried to scratch out, with a lot of good friends, 51 votes—sometimes we got to 53—that is pretty tough going.

If you are a Contra, or a Sandinista, or somebody in the administration, I am not sure how you deal with that problem, of knowing that the next time you have a vote, whether it be quarterly, semiannually or what have you, the whole thing may go down the drain.

We can't answer that today. We are having a good argument and everybody will give his side.

But I still think there has to be staying power in which, in a bipartisan sense, it would appear to Central America that we are prepared to stay there for a while and try to help people.

I don't think that is apparent now.

What I think is apparent in Central America is that by a very close vote, we might abandon ship—period—albeit claiming a humanitarian guise and that some day we will fund the Kissinger report, which we have not done and apparently have no intention of doing this year.

So that is a tough problem for us.

The second problem I see is how capable are the people we are backing.

I don't know about General Gorman's testimony or about anybody else's, but the Contras have not done very well militarily. We can say that we have turned the water off and on, and back and forth, and that we have not been very constant, and that there have been divisions in the ranks, and we have tried to consolidate the south and the north and the Miskito Indians and the Resistance Democrats with some success. But, even as we talk today, we still have fractious leadership. They are not sure precisely how that is moving.

I suppose I would like for you to answer these two questions.

What is our confidence level in the Contras?

Second, are the Sandinistas, is President Ortega, a free agent to negotiate at all?

To what extent does he have the same problem that I perceive Castro has in Cuba, and that is if Castro attempted to negotiate with the United States, he would be a dead man. The Soviets would put a bullet in the back of his head.

To what extent do the Sandinistas really have the ability to negotiate, as opposed not only to their mentors, but, literally, their captors in the sense of either Soviet, Cuban, or other East European types, who not only are there, but who control many aspects of that society.

Can you make any comments on those ideas?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, let me try briefly.

First, our Ambassador in Nicaragua had a meeting some time ago with some Sandinista military people. They commented to him: You know, you guys were in great shape in 1984. This was before Congress cut off the Contras. You had the momentum. You had something like half the country in which you were operating, and then you walked away from it—thank God—or thank whoever they thank.

So, I think it is not fair to say that the Contras have not performed well. They were performing quite well, and then we cut them off.

Now, what are they doing?

We have had 10 weeks in action, really. Thousands more have gone into Nicaragua. It is really too soon to say much. I mean, the initial reports are positive, but they are really very preliminary reports about the nature of the activity. They are just getting reequipped and retrained right now.

But there is nothing in their military history, let us say, I think which gives cause for pessimism, especially the fact that there are volunteers who want to fight, who want to risk their lives for this fight, and it is clearly a fight against a wildly unpopular regime in Nicaragua.

As for Ortega's being a free agent, well, he is not a fully free agent. You could argue that that is in our interest; that is, that he might like to cause confrontations between us and the Soviets which the Soviets wouldn't like.

One does not know, really.

Clearly, for any major step, for example, invasions of Costa Rica or Honduras, he is going to need to talk to Castro and the Soviets to see what their attitude is. And, in fact, Castro has said publicly that if he ever gets into real hot water, he's on his own, which is, I think, helpful, because it is true. The Cubans have no real military capability to rescue Nicaragua.

So, I think the answer is that he is a free agent in most areas. But, when it gets to a confrontation with the United States, in which he needs to be rescued by the Russians, then he needs to talk to the Russians.

Senator LUGAR. Is the request that the administration has made for $105 million simply an estimate of what the tide will bear, or does this have some relationship to what is required for these Contras to be effective?

Mr. ABRAMS. It is a preliminary estimate. That is, it is what I would call a good ballpark figure. But it should not be viewed as a figure cast in cement. And we might ask for more than that if our analysis in the summer indicates that we actually need more than that.

It depends partly on how many men are under arms at that time and how things are going, how well the logistical system is working.

Senator **Lugar**. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The **Chairman**. Thank you.

Senator Sarbanes.

Senator **Sarbanes**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to Senator Biden.

Senator **Biden**. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague. I will just take 30 seconds to apologize.

I am chairing the Judiciary Committee and we are conducting hearings on the drug problem in Latin America generally. I have the Director of the DEA and others up there. I recessed that hearing for the purpose of coming down here. I will come back when I finish that if we are still going. But I don't want anyone to think it is a lack of interest on my part in the subject matter here. I will be back, and I apologize.

Mr. **Abrams**. Thank you.

I hope you will take up the terrific step yesterday in the capture and the immediate extradition here of Carlos Lehder. It is a tremendous step for the world.

Senator **Biden**. We did that already. And I want to say for the record here as I did there that I think that is one of the true acts of courage on the part of a statesman. To think that, in light of the fact that 32 judges were killed, a number of members of parliament, newspaper reporters, editors, et cetera, that was a truly courageous act. And this is an outfit that actually sent assassins behind the Iron Curtain to kill the Colombian Ambassador to Hungary to demonstrate that they could not run too far.

And this president stood up and arrested the No. 1 criminal maybe in the hemisphere, let alone in that country, and has extradited him to this country—unlike, I might add, the willingness of some of our NATO allies to take some similarly tough action.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator **Sarbanes**. Ambassador Habib, I was prompted to put a question to you about the point you made to Senator Pell, who had indicated in his opening statement doubts about your enjoying the full support of the entire administration.

As I recall, your response was that you certainly did enjoy the full support of both the State Department and the White House.

I am curious to know what the external signs are of this full support from the White House that you enjoy.

Ambassador **Habib**. Well, when I took the assignment——

Senator **Sarbanes**. Which was when?

Ambassador **Habib** [continuing]. In response to the President's, to the Secretary's request——

Senator **Sarbanes**. Which was when?

Ambassador **Habib** [continuing]. In March of last year, after I had returned from the Philippines. The Secretary asked me if I would take on this task and I took it on.

I was told what my basic marching orders were, to make sure that the United States maintained a credible, sensible negotiating peaceful track—let's call it that—in a negotiating framework; that I was to do what I could to see to it that we had a credible negotiating track; I was to do what I could to see to it that in the Contadora process, which was the peace process with which we had been dealing since then and before then that the——

Senator **Sarbanes**. This is what you were told at the outset?

Ambassador **Habib**. At the outset.

Senator **Sarbanes**. And you met with the President at the outset, did you not?

Ambassador **Habib**. Yes, I met with the President and I met a number of times with the Secretary.

Senator **Sarbanes**. I want to leave the State Department out of this for a moment. I simply want to address your assertion of strong White House support for your efforts.

Ambassador **Habib**. I will give you an overt sign.

When I was improperly criticized by some people who claim that I was not pursuing administration policy and improperly, I think, and inaccurately criticized for having allegedly wanted to give away the store—was the way the expression was—the President himself corrected any misapprehension that people may have with regard to my actions, and indicated his full support for what I had been doing.

Senator **Sarbanes**. Was this in connection with the controversy surrounding your letter to Congressman Slattery last April?

Ambassador **Habib**. That was part of it; yes.

Senator **Sarbanes**. In that letter, you indicated that U.S. support for regular and insurrectional forces would cease from the date of signature of an acceptable security arrangement with Nicaragua. Is that correct?

Ambassador **Habib**. Let me say something about that letter before we get any further. I want to get this on the record.

Senator **Sarbanes**. I'm giving you the chance to get it on the record.

Ambassador **Habib**. I didn't draft that letter. I was brand new on the job. I came up to the Hill to consult with Members of the Congress as to what they thought of the situation in Central America, which is something I usually do when I take on a job of this sort. I did it in the case of the Philippines. I did it when I used to work in the Middle East.

I came up, and when I had a discussion with some Members, not of this House, but of the other House, I was told that I had said some things which were not understood, which were not clear, that this was the first time they had heard them.

I turned to Mr. Walker, who is sitting behind me, who was with me in that meeting, and I said to him "Look, if there is any misapprehension up here as to what our policy is, maybe it isn't just held by these two or three gentlemen, maybe it is a little wider."

So, "Why don't you guys go back there and draft a statement that states the policy, and then clear that statement." I am no fool. I said to clear that statement. Clear it in the White House, clear it in the State Department, and then bring me a letter which is cleared and I will sign it to those people that I have just been talking to to answer their questions.

That's what I did.

Now, whether the letter was properly prepared or improperly prepared, to my knowledge at that time, the letter was properly prepared, expressed the policy, though maybe had some ambiguity in it. The ambiguity was cleared up. The ambiguity goes over the question of signature versus implementation.

Well, it's quite obvious that an agreement has no meaning unless it is implemented.

So, the question of signature versus implementation is a question of semantics, as far as I am concerned.

That's the history of that thing.

Senator SARBANES. But if you had to do it over again, you would use different semantics, is that correct?

Ambassador HABIB. If they had to do it over again, they probably would have taken into account their little bit of carelessness—well, not carelessness. "Ambiguity" is a better word.

Senator SARBANES. So, your sign of support is that despite all the controversy over that letter and the fact that while it said "date of signature," what you really meant was "implementation," you were supported afterward; is that correct?

Ambassador HABIB. Yes. That is my understanding.

Senator SARBANES. How many times have you met with the President about your mission since the meeting when the charge was given to you?

Ambassador HABIB. To my recollection, there was another meeting after one of my returns from the area, in which we discussed some of my preliminary activities, what I was doing and where I was getting.

Senator SARBANES. That would have been last spring?

Ambassador HABIB. No. It would have been a little bit later than that, I think. I am not sure. I would have to look it up. We can find it for the record, if you wish.

But it was later on, after I had had some visits to the area and had a chance to discuss issues with the people in Latin America.

Senator SARBANES. Were there any meetings subsequent to that one?

Ambassador HABIB. I don't recall. No.

Senator SARBANES. So, you have met twice with the President: once when you were given this assignment, and then, second, at some point——

Ambassador HABIB. Wait—was there another meeting? I think there was another meeting.

There were two other meetings also in which these subjects were discussed in some detail: One during the visit of President Arias and one during the visit of President Azcona.

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes, that's right.

Ambassador HABIB. So there were two more.

Now, that's the President.

Of course, the Vice President is another question. I had seen him a number of times, and I also accompanied him to the Arias inauguration down south, at which time we had great opportunity for discussion.

There is no question that I have had enough contact and guidance for my purposes.

Senator SARBANES. With the Vice President, primarily?

Ambassador HABIB. With both, the Vice President and the President.

But, beyond that, it has always been my practice in carrying out these kinds of assignments for the President to do my work through the State Department.

As you know, Senator, I was, before I retired, a career Foreign Service officer. I have always reported through the State Department and gotten my instructions through the State Department in terms of details. I continue to follow that policy because I think it is the right way to do it.

Senator SARBANES. I am not quarreling with that. I specifically limited the questions to the White House at the outset.

Ambassador HABIB. All right. I don't want to leave the impression that I haven't been getting guidance elsewhere.

Senator SARBANES. Is one of the meetings to which you refer the one that discussed third-country humanitarian support for the Nicaraguan resistance——

Ambassador HABIB. No.

Senator SARBANES [continuing]. That was referred to in the Senate Select Committee report?

Ambassador HABIB. No. I have never participated in any discussions that had anything to do with that subject, to my recollection.

Senator SARBANES. All right.

Mr. Abrams, I want to ask you a question on the $300 million economic development money for the other Central American countries.

That was a part of your package when you leveraged this program through the Congress. Yet when the administration made the allocations of economic support funds, they completely dropped that out of the picture.

Mr. ABRAMS. I think that is not accurate, Senator.

What happened last year was that working with a bipartisan coalition, we and those on both parties who worked with us got that $300 million into the military construction appropriations bill in identical form in both Houses. And the only thing we needed to get that enacted into law and spent was a conference.

We could not get a conference. We pled, we urged, we begged, we pressured, but we couldn't get a conference, and for a very simple reason, and that is that the Speaker wouldn't let us have one. He was so determined to delay for an extra month or two the $100 million, which had already been approved in both Houses, that he didn't mind losing the $300 million.

Now, it is part of a supplemental that we are sending up again, and we have not given up on it. We are going to fight for it again, and I believe we are going to get it.

Senator SARBANES. Well, now, you had a continuing resolution that gave the Department a lump sum in ESF, which the Department then allocated. It could have allocated some of it for this purpose, could it not?

Mr. ABRAMS. We allocated $50 million to El Salvador for earthquake relief.

But, you know, Senator, I really think it is unfair because, if you look at the allocations, our foreign aid requests for the entire world are slashed and then everything is earmarked. So you are saying you should take the little money you have left for the whole world and give all of it to Central America. I don't know if that is a responsible outcome.

Senator SARBANES. But you made this a No. 1 priority item, and yet, to the extent you had some discretion, you didn't use it in order to carry the balance of the package.

Mr. ABRAMS. No. I don't think that is fair.

We made it a No. 1 item, and we would have gotten it were it not for the Democratic leadership of the House.

Now, we are back this year. We are going to ask for it again, and we are going to fight for it again, and if we can reassemble that bipartisan coalition, we're going to get it.

Senator SARBANES. Well, I think you are probably going to have trouble reassembling it after the way you handled it last year. That is a problem for you, rather than a help to you.

Mr. ABRAMS. I know it is. It is a problem that should be addressed to the former Speaker, in my opinion.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Boschwitz.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to pursue a little bit the capability of the people we are backing, and want to look a little bit at the numbers.

I would like to ask Secretary Abrams how many Contras are there? How many are inside of Nicaragua at the moment, to the best of your knowledge, and how many outside? How many in total?

Mr. ABRAMS. I would like not to answer how many are inside Nicaragua at the moment because I think that that is of some military value to the Sandinistas.

A reasonable figure would be to say 15,000 associated with the FDN and several thousand more associated with UNO South, Kisan, Misurasata, and Creole forces.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. So, perhaps upward of 20,000?

Mr. ABRAMS. No, it is below. I would put it below 20,000.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Then 18,000 people or so. That is about three-quarters of 1 percent of the population of Nicaragua——

Mr. ABRAMS. That's right.

Senator BOSCHWITZ [continuing]. Which is a small country. It is about two-thirds the size of my State and has about as many people as we have in the Twin City areas, about 2.5 million people.

How many Sandinistas were there in August 1979?

Mr. ABRAMS. I think a good, round number is 5,000, at the absolute maximum.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Probably closer to 3,000, as I read the figures. As they pursued victory, as you pointed out, it wasn't the type that one would often consider to be a "military" victory.

Incidentally, Senator Biden said that 50,000 lives were lost.

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes, and I don't know where that figure comes from. I take it this is a reference to the struggle against Somoza.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Maybe over 40 years.

Mr. ABRAMS. I think that figure is wrong. We will supply it for the record, but I think it is way, way off.

[The information referred to follows:]

DEATHS DURING THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

The Sandinistas have claimed that 50,000 died during the Nicaraguan revolution, but this number cannot be substantiated. Estimates by independent sources vary widely. Two scholars who have written books on the revolution, Profs. John Booth and Richard Millet, have cited 30,000 to 50,000 killed. Journalist Shirley Christian has estimated that the death toll did not exceed 10,000. On page 137 of the 1986 edition of her book, "Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family," there is a detailed footnote analyzing the present Sandinista claim of 50,000 dead. While Christian's figures cover only the 10 months from September 1978 to July 1979, this is the period where the revolution entered its insurrectional phase and when the overwhelming preponderance of the loss of life occurred.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Way, way high?

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes, way, way high.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Interestingly, if you were to compare three-quarters of 1 percent, it would mean that upward of 2 million people in this country would be actively resisting this government and in some kind of guerrilla force.

Much is made of the Communists in the Philippines. You were associated with the Philippine return to democracy, Ambassador Habib. What is the number over in the Philippines?

Ambassador HABIB. Well, the number is around 20,000, or something probably like that. It was down, and then it grew rapidly in the last years of the Marcos administration.

I don't know what the figure would be at the moment. I have been occupied with a different area of the world.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. It is supposed to be down a little bit.

Ambassador HABIB. It's probably down a little, and over time my guess is that it will come down even further as some of them come out of the hills in response to a better government.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. But, yet, it's a threat.

Ambassador HABIB. Definitely it is a threat to stability, and it also is a drain on the government. It keeps them from doing the things that they otherwise could do with their resources.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Well, I would point out that the Philippines have a population that is 20 times as large as Nicaragua. It has a territory that is certainly more spread out and several times as large. And yet, there are about the same number of people revolting in the Philippines, and certainly who are a threat, just as the Contras, in my judgment, have to be regarded as a threat, simply by the numbers.

There were about 11,000 members of the Somoza national guard during his time in power. How many people are there in the Nicaraguan army now, both reserves and active, Secretary Abrams?

Mr. ABRAMS. About 60,000 in the army and about 70,000 in the reserves.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. That's about 5 percent of the total population. That is a far larger percentage than were under arms in this country during the Second World War.

Is that of recent vintage? Is that a response to the Contras? Or was that built up even before the Contras really swung into action?

Mr. **Abrams**. The buildup really began under President Carter, at a time when the United States was the major foreign aid donor to Nicaragua. The buildup of the Nicaraguan army—I should actually not call it that—the Sandinista army is what it is and what it is called, began instantly when the Sandinistas took over, and was well underway while we are giving them foreign aid.

Senator **Boschwitz**. And we gave about $120 million of foreign aid in the first 2 years of the Sandinista reign in Nicaragua.

Mr. **Abrams**. Right.

Senator **Boschwitz**. So, when you say that three-quarters of 1 percent, or thereabouts, of the people are in an army that is opposing the Sandinistas, compared to one twenty-fifth of 1 percent in the Philippines, just for the sake of comparison, if we had staying power, which the Senator from Indiana spoke about, in our policy, do you think that we could reach a political settlement in the timeframe that you spoke about—2 to 4 years?

Mr. **Abrams**. I would hope so because I think we will soon have more, many more people trained and equipped among the resistance, and they are trying to get back into Nicaragua to fight. And, as they do so, I think the pressure on the government is going to be very, very large. I think the tendency here in Washington is to underestimate what kind of pressure that can be.

I mean, the Salvadoran guerrillas, to take another example, now are about 5,000. And yet they exercise tremendous pressure.

Senator **Boschwitz**. In a country of 5 or 6 million?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes. It's a lot tougher in a Communist country, there is no question about it. The ability of resistance forces to operate in a Communist country is much, much more limited than was true in the Philippines, or in Somoza's Nicaragua or Batista's Cuba.

Nevertheless, when you get into those kinds of numbers, I think it is going to have a substantial impact.

Senator **Boschwitz**. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues, the Senator from Maryland and the Senator from Massachusetts, were not here earlier, nor was Senator Biden, because he talked about the bankruptcy of the policy, the two-pronged policy of supporting the Contras and also trying to support regional negotiations. Just for the benefit of those who were not here, I wonder if you would read again the passage from the Kissinger report, which was just four sentences, that dealt with what would happen in all of Central America in the event that we were to withdraw our support for the Contras.

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

"Theoretically, the United States and its friends could abamdon any hope of such a settlement and simply try to contain a Nicaragua which continued to receive military supplies on the present scale.

"In practical terms, however, such a course would present major difficulties. In the absence of a political settlement, there would be little incentive for the Sandinistas to act responsibly, even over a period of time, and much inducement to escalate their efforts to subvert Nicaragua's neighbors. To contain the export of revolution would require a level of vigilance and sustained effort that would be difficult for Nicaragua's neighbors and even for the United States."

Skipping, "We would then face the prospect over time of the collapse of the other countries of Central America, bringing with it the spectre of Marxist domination of the entire region and, thus, the danger of a larger war."

If I could just read on a couple of more sentences——

Senator Boschwitz. Go ahead.

Mr. Abrams. "The notion that the United States should cope with a Marxist-Leninist Nicaragua, militarily allied to the Soviet Union and Cuba, through a long-term containment assumes an analogy between conditions in postwar Europe and the present circumstances of Central America. The experience of the postwar period, however, shows that containment is effective as a long-term strategy only where U.S. military power serves to back up local forces of stable allies fully capable of coping with internal conflict and subversion from without. In such circumstances, the United States can help to assure the deterrence of overt military threats by contributing forces in place or merely by strategic guarantees.

"On the other hand, where internal insecurity is a chronic danger, and where local governments are unable to deal with externally supported subversion, a strategy of containment has major disadvantages. It would risk the involvement of U.S. forces as surrogate policemen. Any significant deployment of U.S. forces in Central America would be very costly, not just in a domestic political sense, but in geostrategic terms as well.

"The diversion of funds from the economic, social, medical, and educational development of the region into military containment would exacerbate poverty and encourage internal instability in each of the countries that became heavily militarized."

Senator Boschwitz. It is correct to say, is it not, Secretary Abrams, that the 130,000 troops that the Nicaraguans have exceed the numbers of all their neighbors combined?

Mr. Abrams. That's correct.

In fact, Nicaragua, with a population of 2.5 million I believe has a larger army than Mexico.

Senator Boschwitz. Furthermore, you made your statement, Ambassador Habib, prior to the arrival of some of my colleagues. And Senator Biden, again, asked about the revitalization of the Contadora process.

You noted that you had been in a number of capitals, in all the Contadora capitals, trying to do just that. I would like to ask, are we trying to revitalize it, and what is preventing it, which is something of a repeat of your opening statement?

Ambassador Habib. Yes. Of course we are interested in a revitalized Contadora. And I think that, following the visit of the Contadora Foreign Ministers, the Contadora Support Foreign Ministers, and the two Secretaries General, there is, once again, in train, an attempt on the part of Contadora to get back to the last, in effect. There have been proposals for further meetings of the foreign ministers. They have been talking about working groups, they have been talking about even summitry. And certainly they have been talking about the importance of the Central Americans themselves, finding the political will to do what is necessary.

Contadora has had its ups and its downs. It has had its dormant periods and it has had its very active periods. Well, "active," though I don't know how "very" one would call them.

When they submitted the third draft in June 1986, and handed it to the Central Americans and said here you are, this is one to sign, they got responses. The responses were critical of the shortfalls in that draft. As a matter of fact, they were quite critical in the case of the democratic countries. And also, the Sandinistas themselves indicated there would be some requirements for change in that draft to satisfy them.

They went into a dormant period, and nothing really happened in that period.

I used that period as a continuing task to keep the ideas alive, to keep the ideas of a negotiated settlement alive, to keep the 21 objectives, to have them have some meaning, to continue to talk about the necessity of meeting the 3 fundamental criteria which we had established; that is, that the agreement should be comprehensive, that it should deal with all the issues, that it should be simultaneous—that is to say, that in its application it should be across the board and not piecemeal—and that it should be verifiable. Those are the three code words or criteria that I stressed.

I might say that there is nothing incompatible with our having taken those positions with the positions taken by the Central American democracies. There is nothing incompatible with what I was doing with the basic objectives that were set forth for Contadora. On the contrary, it was supportive of it.

So, any idea that, somehow or another, we are less supportive of the concepts involved in Contadora is just not only not accurate, but it is not what I have been doing.

Senator **Sarbanes** [presiding]. I point out to the committee that a vote is underway, and I think we have, at best, 10 minutes. I think we had better recess and go for the vote, and then return and resume the hearings.

Before I leave, though, Ambassador Habib, I have great respect for you and I want to make sure that the record is clear on this point. In the very same Senate Select Committee on Intelligence report, they note that Assistant Secretary Abrams came back before that committee on December 8 and apologized for withholding information on soliciting help from third countries. The Assistant Secretary said that he did not feel he had been asked a direct question and did not realize, until shown the transcript, that his statements left a misleading impression. He therefore took advantage of that opportunity to set the record straight, which I think it important to do.

I believe that in response to the question I put to you, Ambassador Habib, you said that you had not been in any meeting in which solicitation of third-country humanitarian support for the Nicaraguan resistance was discussed.

Ambassador **Habib**. As far as I can recall, I never have been. That is not something that I would have been involved in.

Senator **Sarbanes**. I don't want to lead you on. I am really trying to help set this straight because the report of the Select Committee on Intelligence says, "According to documents received by the committee on May 16, 1986, the President held an NSPG meeting where solicitation of third-country humanitarian support for the Nicaraguan resistance was discussed. Those present included the President and Vice President, Craig Fuller, Secretary Shultz, Ambassador Habib, Assistant Secretary Abrams, Secretary Baker, Secretary Weinberger, Under Secretary Ikle, Director Casey," and it goes on and on and on here. Apparently it was quite a large meeting.

Because of this statement in the report, I thought I should give you the opportunity to explain.

Ambassador **Habib**. It may very well be that I was present for part or all of that meeting. I know there were some meetings at which I was not present for the entire meeting. After I would do my sort of act, I would leave.

But it may be. I might have been there. But it certainly was not a discussion in which I took part. But it's quite possible. It's hard for me to remember what went on in every meeting that I have attended in the last year.

Senator **Sarbanes**. I think that helps to set the record straight, and I brought it up only to give you that opportunity.

Ambassador **Habib**. Well, I'm glad that you did, Senator, and I thank you. I wouldn't want to mislead either you, as you know, or the committee.

Senator **Kerry**. May I make one comment?

Senator **Sarbanes**. Yes.

Senator **Kerry**. I would like to make one comment, if I may. I want to return and ask questions, and I will. But I don't want to leave my colleague's solicitation of the statement of Dr. Kissinger in a vacuum.

I think most of what Dr. Kissinger says is absolutely correct. And I don't think any of us who are opposed to this policy would take issue with that. But that is not what we are talking about.

What he said is if you do nothing, if you simply abandon the Contras, then X, Y, and Z would happen. I suspect that would be the case.

I would also assert that, given the current policy, which encourages the Sandinistas to increase Soviet and Cuban support, to increase the militarization of the region, to make even more unlikely the prospects of a successful Contra effort which you have asserted, it seems to me there is also the creation of an inevitability of a wider conflict as a consequence of that action.

Now, no one that I know of is asserting that all you do is cut off aid.

Mr. **Abrams**. That's what I'm saying.

Senator **Kerry**. Now, let me finish. This is my moment. You have had a lot of time and you will have a lot more.

The point is that this administration—I don't even want to argue this when we come back here because I don't think anybody pretends there has been a genuine, wholehearted, concerted peace effort going on. We have seen peace efforts in this country before. We have seen the Camp David Accords effort. We have seen Middle East shuttle diplomacy. We saw the efforts of Dr. Kissinger in Paris during the Vietnam war, and we know the difference between bona fide efforts to seek a political solution and efforts to avoid it.

Now, I have met with most of the presidents of most of the countries in Central America. I have talked to President Cerezo, to President Arias, and others, and I know, as well as other Senators know, what is happening with respect to the Contadora process.

The Organization of American States, the Treaty of Rio, and countless numbers of international legal avenues available to us give us ample opportunity to assert our prerogatives in this hemisphere in many ways that we are not doing. The issue is not no Contra aid or nothing. The issue is, Is there an alternative, better policy that might be able to place pressure on and isolate the Sandinistas?

There is no one in the U.S. Congress that I know carrying water for the Sandinistas. But, whether it is economic embargoes, quarantines, or legitimate legal actions that you take when legitimate agreements are breached, none of that has been explored.

If you want to take that up afterward, I would be delighted to.

Senator SARBANES. I think we will adjourn the committee in order to——

Senator BOSCHWITZ. I would like to respond, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SARBANES [continuing]. In order to respond to this vote. Otherwise, we are going to miss the vote.

The issue that was put by Senator Kerry can be considered by the witnesses, and we will resume with Senator Kerry immediately after the conclusion of the vote.

The committee stands recessed for 10 minutes.

[A brief recess was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN [presiding]. This meeting will come to order and we will resume this session.

I would add, for the benefit of those who are with us, that there are going to be several votes occurring on the Senate floor that will cause us to go back and forth. I believe that when the committee was recessed, Senator Kerry was speaking. He had spoken, as I understand, for about 3 minutes, so 7 minutes remains.

Senator KERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What I would like to do is maybe come back in the later rounds of questioning. I really want to have a dialog on this aspect of the subject. I think it is important, and I personally believe there are real alternatives.

But I would like to ask some questions, if I can, which relate, really, to the question of how we decide where we are going from here.

I think to know that, you have to know a little bit about where we have been and make some judgments about what this policy represents that is real and what is not.

I would like to ask you, Mr. Secretary, if I can, because there is a lot out there, if you would comment on the following.

On January 8, the Miami Herald published a story quoting Gregory Lagana of the State Department as saying that you "collaborated closely" with Oliver North to help the Nicaraguan Contras during the period when Congress had prohibited any direct or indirect military assistance. And on January 15, the Associated Press reported that you participated in "all key decisions on the Contras, including the distribution of weapons by the so-called private assistance network," during that period when such activities were prohibited by law.

For example, the Associated Press cited a "well-placed administration source" as confirming that you, Colonel North, and CIA officer, and I am quoting, "managed the arms flow to the rebels during the time when Congress had banned military aid."

Is that report true?

Mr. **Abrams**. No.

Senator **Kerry**. Did you, in fact, collaborate with Colonel North?

Mr. **Abrams**. Let me say that I am the chairman of the Inter-Agency Group on Central America. The National Security Council chose who its representatives to that group would be, and, until his resignation, Colonel North was a member of that group, I think at all times since I took this job in the summer of 1985.

So, he was one of the, I don't know, 15 members of the group with whom I worked, that's right.

Senator **Kerry**. So, you didn't manage the arms flow with Colonel North?

Mr. **Abrams**. I had nothing to do with the arms flow.

Senator **Kerry**. Nothing to do, whatsoever, at any point in time?

Mr. **Abrams**. The arms flow—yes. I will give you a short answer. That is correct.

Senator **Kerry**. You did not have anything to do with weapons transactions?

Mr. **Abrams**. That's correct.

Senator **Kerry**. OK.

Now, the Senate Intelligence Committee report——

Mr. **Abrams**. Nor financial transactions, other than the $27 million, which was a program of the State Department.

Senator **Kerry**. But no knowledge of or involvement in the transfer of weapons——

Mr. **Abrams**. All right. Get your question straight.

First you ask me "involvement in." Now "knowledge of."

Senator **Kerry**. My question is very straight.

Mr. **Abrams**. I had the same knowledge you did.

I have gone back and looked at the transcript, the Congressional Record of the debates in the summer of 1985, and during consideration of the $27 million, and the record is replete with the fact, which I take it every member of this committee knew, because it was debated on the floor, that somebody was giving arms, because we weren't, and, yet, there were arms. I mean, that was just a fact. I knew it and I take it you knew it.

Senator **Kerry**. I certainly did, and I asked you about it at the time. And I hope that at a later hearing, Mr. Chairman, we will have an opportunity to go through that record since it was on Code Word.

But I would like to have an executive session in which we examine the answers of that period of time.

But, coming back to this moment, the Senate Intelligence report states that you obtained two bank account numbers to handle the $10 million that you solicited for the Contras in August from Brunei.

Now, according to that report, the CIA task force chief and Col. North both provided you with accounts to handle that money. The

CIA task force chief account was opened in UNO's name, with the intention of having the use of the funds monitored by the State Department to ensure that they were used for humanitarian purposes.

Now you are familiar with that report, right? And is that part of it accurate?

Mr. **Abrams**. Is that the committee report? I can't say that I have read it cover to cover. I am familiar with that passage, though

Senator **Kerry**. You are familiar with that?

Mr. **Abrams**. I am familiar with that passage.

Senator **Kerry**. And is that accurate?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Kerry**. So, they provided you with that account and they wanted to make sure that it went to humanitarian purposes?

Mr. **Abrams**. No.

Senator **Kerry**. That's what the report says.

Mr. **Abrams**. That was my purpose—I mean, it was their purpose; it was also my purpose.

Senator **Kerry**. OK. So you agree with the report's intention——

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, I said——

Senator **Kerry** [continuing]. And you agree with the intent to implement safeguards to ensure the moneys went only for humanitarian purposes; so to speak?

Mr. **Abrams**. It was the intention that there be a kind of vouchering system established whereby we could determine that every expenditure was for humanitarian goods only.

Senator **Kerry**. But you chose to put the funds into the account controlled by Oliver North, without any——

Mr. **Abrams**. Chose after consultation——

Senator **Kerry** [continuing]. Wait, just let me finish—without any procedures for monitoring expenditures from that account?

Mr. **Abrams**. We had no procedures in either case until the money, until we had been informed that the money arrived, which we never were.

When we had been informed that the money had come forward, had we ever been, we would have then established procedures before a dime could have been spent.

Senator **Kerry**. But why, if the CIA set up an account, in conjunction, as the task force chief, and it was going to be put under the one account that was going to monitor it, did you solely decide to put it in——

Mr. **Abrams**. I did not solely decide, Senator. Read the report.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, who put it into the Oliver North account?

Mr. **Abrams**. The question was discussed in the Department of State because I did not think that was a decision I should make solely.

Senator **Kerry**. And who made the decision to put it into the Oliver North account?

Mr. **Abrams**. The decision was made after consultations, I believe the report says, by me and Mr. Hill, that it was probably cleaner to use the other account because we thought it was more likely that it was a new, sole account and uninvolved in any other possible activity of the CIA.

Senator **Kerry**. Did you know what other activity the other account was involved in?

Mr. **Abrams**. Of course not.

Senator **Kerry**. You put money into an account and you didn't know what it was involved in?

Mr. **Abrams**. Excuse me, Senator.

I rely on the good faith and integrity of all those in this Government with whom I work, and I do not assume that anybody is misleading me.

Senator **Kerry**. But the purpose was to make sure it was going to humanitarian assistance.

Mr. **Abrams**. Which is the reason that we thought it would be cleaner and better to use what we thought we could be sure was a new, separate account, whose only purpose would be humanitarian assistance.

Senator **Kerry**. But you didn't know whether or not it was only humanitarian assistance, by your own admission, just now.

Mr. **Abrams**. I thought I knew. I thought I knew.

Senator **Kerry**. But that's not what you said to me a moment ago. You said you didn't know what it was going to go to.

Mr. **Abrams**. No.

I knew that it was not to be spent until we had established a vouchering system which would allow us to track the money. And there was no point in establishing that system until we had been informed that the money had arrived.

If there were no money, then what are we establishing a system for? For a contribution that doesn't exist?

Senator **Kerry**. What does the term "cleaner" mean to you?

Mr. **Abrams**. It means that there is no other involvement in that account; it is a separate account, whose only purpose is to receive this one gift and then be distributed.

Senator **Kerry**. Do you know what happened to the $10 million from Brunei?

Mr. **Abrams**. Personally—no.

Senator **Kerry**. Did you make any effort to find out?

Mr. **Abrams**. Several.

Senator **Kerry**. I have some more questions. I see the yellow light on. But I would like to come back afterward, if I may.

Mr. **Abrams**. We can come back, although I must say that my understanding of the purpose of the hearing, Mr. Chairman, was to discuss S. 184, and the administration's policy in Central America.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, let me just——

Mr. **Abrams**. We have precious little time to do that and I wish we could, and I regret it.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, I think that we ought to make time. I am willing to stay here all day and do it. I think it is that important.

Mr. **Abrams**. I am willing to stay here if you are willing to stay here.

Senator **Kerry**. But I can't make a judgment as to what we ought to do if I have serious reservations about what's happening with money, with rules, with restrictions the U.S. Congress sets up. And I have serious reservations about that.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, Senator, I take it that is what the two Select Committees and the Independent Counsel are for.

Senator KERRY. The Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate has oversight jurisdiction for our foreign policy, and we have the responsibility of making judgments about how policy is being made in the State Department.

Now, if we are going to appropriate money or if we are going to become involved in a process in Central America, and our intent and the guidelines we set up by which that money is going to be distributed are not being followed, then I have a serious question whether the citizens of my State—and I am not going to be presumptuous about the rest of the country—want us appropriating more money for further transactions that could conceivably embroil us in something that we don't want.

Mr. ABRAMS. Quite right.

But it seems to me odd that you would think that more could be found out about this in a hearing that we have another hour or two to go on than by two Select Committees and the Independent Counsel.

Senator KERRY. Well, Mr. Secretary, I'd like to have your answers for the record. As you know, this is going to be an ongoing process, and I intend to ask the questions.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Boschwitz on a matter of personal privilege I think wants to have the floor.

Senator BOSCHWITZ. I asked to respond to Senator Kerry's statement that he made prior to the recess, and Senator Sarbanes said I could do that after the hearing was resumed. If I may, I would like to do so at this time.

It was more of a freestanding statement that Senator Kerry made, not a question. Perhaps some of it was answered prior to my return by the witneses, but I would like to just answer it and make a short freestanding statement as well. It won't be very long, so I won't hold up Senator McConnell much.

Mr. Chairman, the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts said that there were no apologists promoting the cause of the Sandinistas in the Congress. Not a single person I believe the Senator from Massachusetts said.

I can understand why. They are a Marxist-Leninist group, and not many Members of Congress, or any Members of Congress, apparently, would want to be associated with them. Certainly not I.

However, I would suggest to the distinguished junior Senator from Massachusetts that many people are, in fact, doing just that, because, just as the Kissinger report said, as was read now twice during the course of this hearing, in the event armed resistance against the Sandinistas were to cease, there would, indeed, be quite a bit of turmoil in Central America, and the neighbors of Nicaragua would be threatened, and, probably, according to the Assistant Secretary of State, would not be able to survive.

We took a look at the numbers of people that are presently in the Nicaraguan army.

Those are four struggling little democracies. For the first time in the history of Central America are all four countries democracies. And it would be a shame to see them overthrown.

But I certainly agree with the statements, or the essence of the Kissinger report, which I would remind my friend from Massachusetts was bipartisan.

I say to my friend from Massachusetts that, in effect, there are people here who are supporting the cause of the Sandinistas when they say that armed resistance should end or that no support should go to the Contras.

The **Chairman**. Senator McConnell.

Senator **McConnell**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Returning to the point of the hearing, it seems to me——

Ambassador **Habib**. Mr. Chairman, I don't want to take away from his time to answer his question.

Senator **Boschwitz**. Feel free.

Ambassador **Habib**. But could I answer the points raised.

Senator **Boschwitz**. Go right ahead.

The **Chairman**. Ambassador Habib.

Ambassador **Habib**. Senator Kerry raised an interesting question about whether or not the negotiation effort we have been making has been a serious one. That, in effect, is what you said.

I think that it is incumbent upon me to point out a few things.

First of all, it is a very complicated process when you get this kind of negotiation.

I have been associated with negotiations that have taken longer and where the parties are actually at the table. For example, the famous Vietnam negotiations began in 1968 and didn't end until, really, 1973.

The talks on the Middle East have been going on and on with a peace process for 40-odd years. I don't know how long it is going to take for somebody to negotiate an end to the Iraq-Iran war. But some day, somebody is going to have to do it.

Now only when they get complicated, but when you add parties to the negotiation, it becomes even more complicated.

I can tell you this. As far as our efforts are concerned and my responsibilities were, they were not only to give the process credibility, but to move it along. As a matter of fact on a number of occasions, I think my colleague, Mr. Randolph, who is sitting behind me, was with me on one or two of my trips. I actually said to some of the Contadora members or Contadora Support Group—I don't want to identify which one—that I was tired of appearing to be more in favor of Contadora than the members of Contadora were; that there was a certain call it "slowness" of action, if you want to call it that, that was not my idea of how to conduct an "active negotiation." Beyond that, I would say that negotiations sometimes have particular moments when they are very timely, in terms of results; and there are other moments when you sort of tread water while people align themselves and get the necessary political will to do it.

I think it is rather significant that the recent visit of the Contadora Group and the Secretaries General, in their final statement, which they made out of Mexico, after having completed the trip, said that, unfortunately, there was a lack of political will in Central America among the parties.

If you really want to nail it down, it is lack of political will on the part of the Sandinistas to go ahead with the comprehensive agreement that was envisaged in the 21 objectives and which has been supported ever since by the democracies, particularly with respect to the political aspects of the agreement.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much, Ambassador Habib.

Ambassador **Habib**. I just want to make that point. I just don't want to accept that we have not taken the process seriously.

The **Chairman**. Right.

Silence does not mean acquiescence or acceptance.

Thank you.

Senator McConnell.

Senator **Kerry**. Thirty seconds, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Ambassador, I have great respect for you, and I know your skills are enormous, and I think if you were truly empowered in this process, I have great faith that you could really come up with a solution.

I happen personally to believe, and many share the feeling, that you have not been so empowered. When the Contadora and Support Group of eight ministers came here, they pleaded with the Secretary of State not to send Contra aid. They weren't even received by the President of the United States.

The Ambassador to this country from Nicaragua, has never had a formal meeting with our Secretary of State.

Senator **Boschwitz**. I may have to answer this as well.

The **Chairman**. There will be regular order.

Senator McConnell.

Senator **McConnell**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I assume that all of this did not come out of my time.

The **Chairman**. No. You have 10 minutes.

Senator **McConnell**. It seems to me that one of the problems we have had—and I have supported, as both of you know, assistance to the Contras—one of the problems we have had is that we stand virtually alone in the world in support of the Contras.

It seems to me in large measure that is because they have done a totally inadequate job of getting their story out to the world. It seems to me that the Sandinistas are quite adept at public relations.

So I am wondering, Mr. Secretary—and, Mr. Ambassador, you might answer this, too, if you like—what assistance, if any, we have been to the Contras in the effort to build some kind of international support so that this appears not just to be an American initiative to assist them.

What are we doing to help them with the public relations side of this?

Mr. **Abrams**. We try, within the limits of, for example, the law that prevents us from helping them lobbying here. But I don't think that the real problem is a public relations problem. I think that the real problem, in terms of what you are talking about, is lack of confidence in the United States and in our staying power.

We hear a lot of things privately that people don't say publicly. Now, it's not always the case.

President Arias made that statement that I read about how bad it would be if aid to the Contras were cut, and nothing more—which, as I read it, is exactly and precisely S. 184, which is before us today.

You ask people why don't you get behind us? Why don't you come out? What do you think of the Sandinistas? The universal answer is that the Sandinistas are terrible, the Sandinistas are Communist, the Sandinistas must be forced to choose whether they want to be part of the Americas or whether they want to be part of the Soviet bloc.

Well, why don't you say more about it? The answer, generally speaking, turns out to be because we don't want to be left out there on a limb, when you decide to walk away from it, as well you may.

And, it's very tough, of course. You can't give any guarantees about the way Congress is going to vote. There is a lack of confidence that we have the staying power to see this through. And, as I sometimes have put it, it is a tough conversation to have with a Latin American in a restaurant in Washington, DC, where the waiters and busboys are Vietnamese. There is a lesson there.

Ambassador **HABIB**. You asked, Senator, what we try to do about generating international support.

I just returned from a visit—a trip, not a visit—a trip to Europe in which I think we visited seven countries in 5 days. We saw presidents and prime ministers in an attempt to make sure that some of our European allies understood what we were doing on the negotiating track, before they went to the meeting of the EC with the Central Americans and the Contadora Group, which is a meeting to begin on February 10.

I just wanted to make sure they understood where we stood on negotiations. That was my purpose, and I think I had a certain degree of at least success in getting them to understand where we stood; whereas, prior to that they had not had that direct contact.

So, we do try to make sure that people understand why we stand where we do.

Senator **MCCONNELL**. So, both of you feel that there is a lot more——

Ambassador **HABIB**. Well, there is a lot more that can be done, obviously.

Senator **MCCONNELL**. Then is it safe to conclude that both of you feel there is a lot of unstated, private support for what we are doing there?

Completely aside from what governments are saying publicly, is there, in your judgment, some understanding among our allies in the world of why we are doing what we are doing, and some private assurance that they agree that this is what ought to be done?

Ambassador **HABIB**. I would say that there certainly is on the part of some, and there are certainly some who balance it with, at the same time, some critical comment, advice on how to alter, modify—you know, there is no absence of that kind of discussion with your friends and allies.

If you have a fairly open discussion, somebody will come out and tell you that they are against part of your policy, but that they support your basic objectives; or they agree to some of it and disagree with other actions that you have been taking.

Some of them come out quite openly in full support of what you are doing. It's a mixed bag. A mixed bag.

In Central America, on the other hand, I think as far as the four democracies in Central America, I think I can fairly say, in my opinion, that there is nothing that we have been proposing with respect to diplomatic negotiating settlements that is inconsistent with what they have been proposing, or vice versa; that there is nothing that they have been proposing that is inconsistent with what I have been telling them.

Senator **McConnell**. On the assumption, then, that some further evidence of support from this Government and some measure of success, as the administration is defining success, would cure, to some degree, the public relations problem and quite possibly bring about some public support from some places in the world, how would we define "success"?

In other words, you indicated earlier that to win this thing—and winning it, bearing in mind the way you defined "winning it" I happen to concur with, which is some kind of free and open election situation, as opposed to a military conquest of the Sandinista army—assuming we are talking about winning, as you define "winning," how would we measure that?

What kind of successes can we look for, in the next 6 months, in order to begin to demonstrate not just to the Sandinistas but to people in this country, some of whom sit on the other side of this room and have no faith in this policy, what kind of success can we anticipate if we move forward with additional assistance of a military nature?

Mr. **Abrams**. Let me say that on the military side I think there is a guerrilla war. What were the criticisms made last year? We don't know where the money is going. Well, we account nickel by nickel to the Intelligence Committees for everything that is spent in the program, so that is out.

There really is no will to fight. There is no desire to fight on the part of the resistance fighters, they don't even want to go—this is being disproved on a daily basis as hundreds and hundreds more go on, leaping at the chance, at the first chance they have to get back into the fray, to liberate their country.

So that one is going to be out the window.

Ability to put pressure on the Sandinistas—I think in the timeframe you gave with the numbers that will be achieved, you will see resistance activity really all over Nicaragua, and really giving the Sandinistas a hard time.

Senator **McConnell**. Yes, but how are we going to measure this? If it is a guerrilla war, we are not going to measure it in terms of territory held.

Mr. **Abrams**. That's correct.

Senator **McConnell**. All right. How are we going to measure the success? A body count?

Mr. **Abrams**. No.

I think you would measure number of people in country, and I think you would measure areas of the country in which they can now operate, which, as of November, when this program kicked in, were small. They would be very large. I think you would measure the number of encounters or skirmishes, if you will, and how much fighting is going on.

I think you would try to get a measure—and it is tough in a Communist country—of popular support, by some proxy measure, whether it is demonstrations that take place, and there were some a couple of weeks ago, support by the people quietly and secretly for the resistance fighters in any area they may be in—are they able to get food, for example, from the people.

It is difficult to measure the success, but I think those are some of the ways.

Senator McCONNELL. Well, how will we get that story out, that those things are happening?

Mr. ABRAMS. I would think that if those things happen, the U.S. press coverage of them will come.

I mean, at a certain point there will be war correspondents in there with the Contras, reporting on this. And some of it, I guess, will have to come from the Intelligence Committees, as they get detailed reports of what is going on onside. They may not be able to give the details out, but they can give the impressions out to their colleagues and to the public.

Senator McCONNELL. And then it is your judgment that if there are some successes, measuring them in the variety of different ways that you suggest will begin to solve the public relations problem?

Mr. ABRAMS. I think so.

I think it will answer a number of the questions that were posed last year about the nature of this program.

Senator McCONNELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator SARBANES [presiding]. Senator Sanford.

Senator SANFORD. Thank you.

I would like to go back to the illustration of the two cylinders. I think we probably are pumping on one of the cylinders, the military operation, fairly diligently. But I worry about whether or not we are working on the other cylinder adequately.

I would like to ask two or three questions related to that.

First, it seems to me that we should be thinking beyond this military action, beyond a peaceful solution, looking, perhaps, at some way that we might assist that troubled part of this hemisphere and do something about economic development and raising the standard of living, and, if we could use that illustration, having a type of Marshall Plan for Central America. And in that respect, whether or not you are finding support for our military operation, do you think you could find support among our democratic allies to help in the restructuring and the rehabilitation and the economic development of Central America if we had such a plan?

Ambassador HABIB. Yes, sir. I think so.

As a matter of fact, a number of the allies do provide economic assistance to Central America. Some of them even provide economic assistance to Nicaragua. That has been declining as the nature of the Sandinista regime and its internal actions have sort of come to roost, or become known. There has been a tendency to reduce it.

Frankly, we have urged that the money be shifted in the other direction, and be provided to the democracies, who can use it better and who will, in effect, see to it that it supports the kind of political-social-economic structure which is best suited for the nation's development and progress.

My own feeling is that, if the situation were to be resolved through the kind of peaceful settlement that we have in mind, we certainly ought to look beyond, to economic development, not only to our own contribution, but to those of our friends and allies.

Senator **Sanford**. I would hope that we would be thinking in broader terms, now, and actively trying to develop something that would be as bold as the Marshall Plan.

Ambassador **Habib**. Certainly it would be a region that would be worthy of such an effort.

Senator **Sanford**. Let me inquire now about a feeling that I have begun to get, not only in the last few weeks, but from this session this morning, that the four democracies have fairly well concluded that the Contadora approach is no longer viable and that they need to take control of the situation.

Ambassador **Habib**. No, I would not draw that conclusion, Senator.

I think that what has happened is that the four democracies got a little bit I wouldn't say fed up but a little bit impatient with the process.

President Azcona, of Honduras, for example, made it very clear that he considered it has been too slow and not serious and a little biased.

President Duarte has made it very clear that he wishes they would move a little faster.

President Arias has made it very clear that he is unhappy to the attention they have been paying to the political process, the need for democratization and pluralism.

So, as a result, and partly because of the increased unity and harmony among the four democracies, they have been coming up with ideas of their own of how to move things along.

I think there is going to be a meeting, for example——

Senator **Sanford**. This coming week of the four presidents.

Ambassador **Habib** [continuing]. That's right, of the four.

Now, I think you are pointing out something that is rather significant. But it doesn't mean that they are giving up on Contadora because Contadora, as a framework, is useful to them and they know it.

Senator **Sanford**. Well, it seems to me that these four presidents, President Arias in particular, are saying that a two-phased settlement is possible; that, first, we can remove all foreign troops and foreign help; and, second, that we then can concern ourselves with the internal government of Nicaragua.

Ambassador **Habib**. Well, no.

Senator **Sanford**. Let me read what he said. President Arias disagrees sharply with the U.S. view that military pressure by the Contras is the only way to change the Nicaraguan system. I grant you that we have another idea, but his suggestion is that we aren't doing much about it.

He expressed strong opposition to the Contra war effort and vowed that his government would be inflexible with those who violate it.

I think the armed struggle, he says, "only serves as an excuse for the Sandinistas to not advance in this process of democratization." Arias said in the interview, "The armed struggle is the opium given to the Nicaraguan people so that they don't rebel out of the dissatisfaction they feel for a regime that has failed. I think the

Sandinista regime has failed and it has failed because Marxism is not the best solution for developing countries, like those in Central America."

And he goes on to say that they can approach it this way.

I suppose my question is, partially, Are we willing to encourage them to proceed?

Ambassador HABIB. Why don't you take it first and then I will add something to it.

Mr. ABRAMS. Do you know the date of that statement, Senator?

Senator SANFORD. February first.

Ambassador HABIB. Of this year?

Senator SANFORD. It's in last Sunday's paper.

Mr. ABRAMS. I'll have to get that.

Senator SANFORD. Well, you haven't been briefed yesterday, to use your expression.

Ambassador HABIB. That's right. [Laughter.]

Mr. ABRAMS. What paper is it?

Senator SANFORD. Oh, well, that probably explains it. It's the Washington Post. [Laughter.]

Mr. ABRAMS. If it's not in the New York Times—well. [Laughter.]

I think it is very important to say that President Arias, of all four presidents, has been the strongest in flat-out demanding the democratization of Nicaragua. The strongest of the four—and I mean no deprecation of the other three. He has taken on a special role in that connection.

And I do not believe that he thinks this can be a two-stage process in which democracy is left for later.

Senator SANFORD. Well, he doesn't say that it—and I can read between the lines, that it needs to be left until later; but it can be done in two stages, that you can have some assurances there, but you are not going to have the Sandinistas relinquish power, and that is one step.

Now, let me read you what he said further on and then get your general comments. Can we trust these people now to move forward and should that not be our policy? Asked what would happen if the Contras gave up their war effort on the basis of the first stage and the Sandinistas still did not install an acceptable democracy, as presumably they would have promised, he said, "I have asked myself that many times." And he is right next door.

"At least then everyone would know what the Sandinistas really are. The Sandinistas would have no more excuses. The Contras are their big excuse."

Mr. ABRAMS. I saw President Arias last Saturday, and he gave a very similar comment.

But then what?

I mean, I think you have an obligation, as I have, to say all right, now, with that new found clarity, then what? Then what do we do?

Senator SANFORD. Surely. That is why I am saying that I don't think our policy now is pursuing the other cylinder.

Mr. ABRAMS. Let me just clarify this because I think it is important.

What President Arias seems to be saying is that if you take Sandinista promises at full value and cut off the aid to the Contras and then there is no democracy, then what happens, and he says, "Well, then, everyone understands who the Sandinistas are," then my question is: And then what? With that new-found clarity, what is U.S. policy to be with respect to this now completely unopposed Communist regime in Nicaragua?

Senator **SANFORD**. Well, I can give you a scenario, but I don't know what he has in mind, and I think it is important for us to know what he has in mind, and important for us to give him support because they are closest to the problem, they are in the most potential danger, they apparently are willing to move with assurance in the direction that they believe in. And I think we ought to know more about it and that we ought to be inclined to give them the kind of encouragement and support that they need for this kind of initiative.

I am just a little bit afraid that we are too reluctant to back off and take other initiatives.

Mr. **ABRAMS**. Senator, on this initiative, we have been 100 percent backing the Central American presidents; and, in fact, we urged the other three presidents to go to San José——

Senator **SANFORD**. Well, let me ask you this question.

Mr. **ABRAMS** [continuing]. And to attend that meeting, and we have been trying as best we could to support President Arias' efforts completely.

That was, in part, the reason that I and the Ambassador met with the Costa Rican Foreign Minister in Miami.

Senator **SANFORD**. Thank you very much. My time is up.

Ambassador **HABIB**. This is interesting, so let me just jump in for a minute.

I have had many conversations with President Arias in which we have discussed the interrelationship between force and negotiation.

He believes—and it is his firm belief—that the most important thing that could be done in Nicaragua is to democratize. He thinks that would really increase his sense of security, because a democratic Nicaragua, where you would have open discussion, open debate, you would have some sort of checks and balances, would prevent Nicaragua from doing anything suddenly against its neighbors and threatening them. Also, you wouldn't have as large an army. If you had an open debate, you probably wouldn't have the kind of government that you have.

On the other hand, he does not reject, as a matter of fact, he has always endorsed the 21 objectives of Contadora. It is just a question of how you phase them in his view and what priority you give to their importance.

He believes political evolution in Nicaragua is the most important thing for the long run.

On the other hand, if you talk to the other Central American governments, who are somewhat under the gun, you cannot get President Duarte to agree that it isn't equally important to get commitments on military aspects of Sandinista behavior.

Now, what will happen, in my guess, is the four presidents will get together, they will harmonize their views, they will endorse Arias' political proposals. When Secretary Abrams and I met with the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica and he discussed these ideas with us, I can assure you we didn't tell him no, no, no. On the contrary, we said go ahead. We only made two reservations.

We said, first of all, be sure and discuss them with the other Central Americans because we are not going to deal with you separately and distinctly than our dealing with all four of the democracies.

The second thing we said to him is do you have in mind that this would fit in the Contadora context so that it deals in a comprehensive way and a verifiable way, and he said yes.

So, other than that, I think that the ideas that they propose are not only worthwhile of support, but they are very timely at this time, as the Contadora process revives itself.

Senator Sanford: Well, I thank you.

I am just concerned that we must take them very seriously.

Ambassador **Habib**. We certainly do.

Senator **Sarbanes**. Senator Pressler.

Senator **Pressler**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome. I have been moving between two or three committees this morning, and I hope I am not asking a question that has already been covered. If I have, tell me.

My question is about results. I must say that I reluctantly voted for aid to the Contras last year, and I don't know what I will do this year. But the point is the Contras apparently don't control a single village.

I am told that they have put out these land mines, but in terms of any type of offensive, it really hasn't been carried out, and we have these vague references to there being a lot of Contras inside of Nicaragua, apparently doing something. But what are the real results?

They have been in operation for 4 years. I am willing to help out, but if the basketball team is doomed to lose, even if you agree with the purpose—and I think the purposes have been well stated. I am not arguing about the purposes, and I am not concerned about them. I would agree with the purposes. But is this a winning team?

I don't see any prospects. They don't control a single village. I don't see that they have had any victories.

Why don't they control a single village?

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, I mentioned actually before you were here an interesting conversation that Ambassador Berghold, the U.S. Ambassador to Managua, had with some Sandinista military——

Senator **Pressler**. I can't quite hear you.

Mr. **Abrams**. I'm sorry.

I mentioned a conversation that our Ambassador in Managua had with some Sandinista military, who commented to him that, as of 1984, when U.S. Government aid to the Contras was cut off, they were doing splendidly. They had lots of momentum, and they had some degree of control in about half the country. And then, that ended by a vote of the U.S. Congress.

I think it is right to say right now that this——

Senator **Pressler**. They had control of half the country?

Mr. **Abrams**. No. They had some degree of control—that is to say that in about half the country——

Senator **Pressler**. What year was that?

Mr. **Abrams**. Summer of 1984.

Senator **Pressler**. In the summer of 1984, the Contras had control of half——

Mr. **Abrams**. Some degree of control in about half the country.

Senator **Pressler**. Some degree of control in half the country. Then we cut off the aid.

Mr. **Abrams**. That's correct.

Senator **Pressler**. And then they lost out?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, what happened in the interim is that this huge gap has opened up between the capabilities of the Contras and those of the Sandinistas, in part because the Sandinistas have grown so much—helicopters, gunships, tanks, armored personnel carriers, 23,000 tons of Soviet arms last year.

Now, of course, we are trying to catch up.

This program has been in effect for 10 weeks in reality. That is, equipment has been moving and training has been underway for about 10 weeks.

What are the results?

The first result, of course, is a number of people have been trained, thousands of people have been reequipped and thousands have been reinfiltrated into Nicaragua, where some are already fighting and others are walking to the positions, to the areas where they will be undertaking their responsibilities.

And, in fact, the number of skirmishes has already increased significantly.

That is in 10 weeks, and I think it is a pretty good result.

Senator **Pressler**. Now, you say that a number of people have been trained. So far, then, the funds have been used to pay salaries, buy weapons?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, there really aren't any salaries.

Senator **Pressler**. There are no salaries. So, the average Contra, what does he live on? Is he strictly a volunteer?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, if he is in a camp, he is given food.

Senator **Pressler**. How are the rest of them supported? There are 15,000, I understand.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, there used to be many, many who were in camps because they were unable to get back into Nicaragua, and they were supported, they were fed, that is.

Now, of course, as they go in, to some extent—well, I don't want to get into too much detail. This is an open hearing, and the details of the program really are for the most part for the Intelligence Committees.

But the money is being spent primarily on training, on reequipment, and on logistics.

Senator **Pressler**. I'm just trying to get a picture.

Mr. **Abrams**. You remember the 70-30 division between——

Senator **Pressler**. Yes.

I'm just trying to get a picture of what is really happening. I am trying to get down to the bottom line.

So there are approximately 12,000 people who are training and they are preparing——

Mr. **Abrams**. No, I didn't, I wouldn't use any number.

Senator **Pressler**. OK, fine—5,000 or——

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, I would rather not use a number in a public hearing.

Senator **Pressler**. All right. Then there are some people, you said there are some people in training.

Mr. **Abrams**. There are many people in training——

Senator **Pressler**. Many people in training.

Mr. **Abrams**. [continuing]. But I don't think I want to use a number.

Senator **Pressler**. There are many people in training, and just give me a picture of it. I mean, on a day to day basis, do they get a salary?

Mr. **Abrams**. They do not get a salary.

Senator **Pressler**. They do not get a salary.

Mr. **Abrams**. These are people who volunteer to risk their lives to liberate their country. They don't get any money for this.

Senator **Pressler**. OK.

So, they support themselves in what way?

Mr. **Abrams**. We support them. It is the money that you appropriated that provides food for them.

Senator **Pressler**. That is the point I am making. How is it paid to them?

Mr. **Abrams**. It isn't paid to them. They get food.

Senator **Pressler**. All right. They get food and shelter.

Mr. **Abrams**. They get——

Senator **Pressler**. There is not a monthly stipend for each one?

Mr. **Abrams**. That's correct.

What there is in some cases is a monthly stipend for their families. If their families are out in a refugee camp and have nothing to live on, or, worse yet, are not in a refugee camp and have nothing to live on, there is some money for the families in some cases. The fighters don't get a salary. What they do get is food, clothing, and shelter, when they are out of the country; and then, of course, if they go in, they have to live off the land, except to the extent that they can carry things in with them.

Senator **Pressler**. So, then, their level, which is what I am trying to get at, is very high.

Mr. **Abrams**. It has to be.

Senator **Pressler**. It isn't just a way to make a living?

Mr. **Abrams**. There is no money, there is no salary for being in that resistance force. All there is is the chance to risk your life, and some of them lose their lives.

Senator **Pressler**. But aren't these people, for the most part, wouldn't their alternative be to be a laborer or something like this? They would probably be economically worse off if they weren't Contras?

Mr. **Abrams**. No, I wouldn't say that is right, because there are large numbers of Nicaraguan refugees, for example, in Costa Rica and in this country, and they would probably be better off in Florida. They certainly would not be risking their lives on a daily basis in combat, and they would probably be economically better off as refugees in this country.

But they have chosen not to become refugees. They would rather fight.

Senator **Pressler**. OK.

Now I want to know what's going to happen. I know a lot of this is secret and so forth, but I am being asked to vote on it.

Let's say that we appropriate the money. What's going to happen?

Are we going to take villages or what?

Is there going to be a major assault?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, here, as I said before, I agree completely with General Galvin—with General Gorman, actually, and General Galvin. This is not a conventional war. This is a guerrilla war.

If they try to take and hold territory at this point, what they are doing is inviting the Sandinistas to utilize the advantage they have in manpower and in weaponry—it's those Soviet helicopter gunships that are murderous—and to bring those in to that spot that they are holding and to just kill them, kill them all.

So, it is bad tactics in unconventional warfare to try to hold territory at this point, and they are not going to do it.

Senator **Pressler**. What are they going to do?

Mr. **Abrams**. The first thing they are going to do is to get trained and equipped.

The second thing they are going to do is——

Senator **Pressler**. All right, trained and equipped.

Then, once we have done that, what's next?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, in the case of those who are trained and equipped, to return to Nicaragua, which thousands and thousands have done and thousands more are in the process of doing.

Senator **Pressler**. OK. Give me a visual—I mean, I am a practical man. They are going to be trained and equipped so that they are going to walk back into Nicaragua, with what equipment?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, I think I would rather not say with exactly what equipment. I think that is of value to the Sandinistas to know.

Senator **Pressler**. OK.

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, you are entitled to all of this information, but not in an open hearing.

Senator **Pressler**. I am not trying to get you to break any security rules. I have to justify this to my constituents.

Mr. **Abrams**. For the most part, they are equipped as a very light, a very lightly armed force, because they are guerrillas.

Senator **Pressler**. So, I presume that they would walk back into Nicaragua——

Mr. **Abrams**. Right.

Senator **Pressler** [continuing]. With a weapon——

Mr. **Abrams**. Right.

Senator **Pressler** [continuing]. And go to a town, and become what?

Mr. **Abrams**. Go to areas where they are to operate.

Senator **Pressler**. And do what?

Mr. **Abrams**. Primarily try to drive the Sandinistas back from areas where they have control.

Senator **Pressler**. So, then, there would be an attack? They would drive them back?

Mr. **Abrams**. There would be skirmishing with Sandinista forces. That's right.

Senator **Pressler**. Would they be together, these Contras who walked back in? I mean, they would go in as a force? There would be an invasion? Is that correct?

Mr. **Abrams**. They would go in units of small numbers and stay in small numbers as a guerrilla force would.

Senator **Pressler**. And they would carry out acts of terrorism or acts of——

Mr. **Abrams**. No, they would not carry out acts of terrorism. They would carry out acts against Sandinista military targets.

You can analogize this.

Senator **Pressler**. I am not saying that acts of terrorism are necessarily bad in all cases.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, they are necessarily bad.

The **Chairman** [presiding]. Oh, so then when they are our terrorists, it's OK?

Senator **Pressler**. Well, we had a few in our Revolutionary War.

What I am trying to get from you is a scenario of exactly what is going to happen.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, it is standard—and, here again, I agree with General Gorman, for a guerrilla war—what you try to do is to make it too dangerous for the Sandinistas to operate freely in certain areas of the country.

Senator **Pressler**. But how do you do that?

Mr. **Abrams**. You do it by engaging in combat with them in areas and trying to drive them back to their bases so that they lose control of the countryside.

It is standard guerrilla tactics.

Senator **Pressler**. OK.

Mr. **Abrams**. Which they were on the way to losing in 1984.

Senator **Pressler**. All right. After they are trained and equipped, how long is it going to take for them to start doing this?

Mr. **Abrams**. They have already begun, and the number of skirmishes has increased significantly, even in this 10-week period.

Senator **Pressler**. So, now, we can expect them to start holding villages?

Mr. **Abrams**. No, you cannot.

Senator **Pressler**. We cannot? OK.

What can we expect them to do?

Mr. **Abrams**. I think it is a bad tactic, given the tremendous Sandinista advantage in armaments and, in particular, its mobility and the helicopter gunships, to stay in one place.

A guerrilla force should be mobile. If it is static, it is going to get wiped out.

Senator **Pressler**. Mr. Chairman, is that a new vote, or the same vote?

The **Chairman**. That's a new vote—no, I'm sorry. That's the same vote.

Senator **Pressler**. Is it the third vote we have had?

Senator **Kerry**. It's a new vote. It's the third vote.

Senator **Pressler**. Well, I have not voted yet. So just let me conclude this by saying that I continue hearing that they are not going to carry out acts of terrorism, they are not going to try to hold territory, they are going to infiltrate with weapons. But if they are not going to try to hold territory, I don't quite get what the objective is.

Mr. **Abrams**. They are trying to deny the Sandinistas control over the countryside. It is their first aim.

Senator **Pressler**. Well, let's say that this is a village that the Sandinistas control, and you want to deny them control of the village.

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, again, it is exactly what happens in any guerrilla war. The first thing you do is try to make it dangerous for them to travel in that area; you try to make it dangerous for them to be there at night; you try to push them back to their bases so they lose the control they now have over the countryside.

It is a classical and fundamental way of running a guerrilla war. You liberate the countryside first, first the countryside from the Sandinista control.

Senator **Pressler**. I served in our Army in Vietnam. I have no claims to any knowledge of being an expert in this business. But it seems to me that the other side there carried out acts of terrorism against the civilian population, and anybody in sight, and were very successful at holding territory as well as driving people out.

But it seems that we keep contradicting ourselves. We keep denying what we really want them to do.

Has it really been laid out, once they are trained and equipped exactly what we would like to see them do?

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure, and you are entitled to know all of that, but not in an open hearing.

Senator **Pressler**. And I cannot tell my constituents that without violating——

Mr. **Abrams**. You can't tell the military details, Senator, of the battle plan against the Sandinistas. Of course not. That is of tremendous military value to the Sandinistas.

Senator **Kerry**. Our battle plan or theirs?

The **Chairman**. I think the time has expired.

Senator Dodd.

I would add here that Senator Dodd is chairman of the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs, and it is his bill that we are primarily here to consider and, hopefully, to mark up this afternoon.

Senator Dodd.

Senator **Dodd**. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My apologies to you, but as you know, we had this hearing scheduled a week or so ago, but I also have a hearing in the Banking Committee that I am chairing, so I apologize for missing a good part of this morning. Now we have a series of procedural votes on the floor—and that is all they are—procedural votes instructing Members to appear on the floor of the Senate, and I am going to miss a couple of them because I am afraid that we are going to have this hearing come to a quick end if we don't stay here.

So, Mr. Chairman, I will stay through these next two procedural votes.

The **Chairman**. Thank you.

Senator **Dodd**. Let me say, first of all, that I know Senator Kerry is going to come back in a minute and I was here for his exchange. Just as an editorial comment, and I think you know this, Elliott, while I believe the issues should be separate, wherever possible, the investigation into the allegations surrounding the "Irangate" or the "Contra Scam" or whatever you want to call it, while that should be separate, it is not entirely possible to separate them.

There clearly are overlapping concerns. And, while you are absolutely correct that there are committees investigating the scandals, or the alleged scandal, clearly this committee has an obligation in the context of examining the foreign policy questions, and it would be rather ridiculous to suggest somehow that we could do that without raising or examining as well those questions that are going to be raised by those committees.

Mr. **Abrams**. I agree with that. But if you are going to mark up your bill today——

Senator **Dodd**. Well, we are marking up a bill that cuts off Contra aid. That is the bottom line of this bill.

Mr. **Abrams**. Then we ought to talk about the effect of cutting it off.

Senator **Dodd**. No question about it. But Senator Kerry's lines of questioning I think are completely legitimate and do relate to the bill itself.

Let me begin, if I can, by asking both you and Ambassador Habib this.

As I understand it, very briefly, the administration's posture has not changed with regard to our policy in Central America. It is a policy that is a two-track policy; a policy that, on the one hand, supports the Contras as a vehicle or the means by which we encourage the Sandinistas to sit down at a negotiating table, to resolve the differences between ourselves and them, the Contras and them, and the Central American states and the Nicaraguans. That is broadly stated.

Would either of you have any disagreement with that?

[No response.]

Senator **Dodd**. Well, I would like to know how many times, Mr. Secretary or Mr. Ambassador, either of you have visited Nicaragua.

Mr. **Abrams**. I have been there once.

Ambassador **Habib**. I have never been there.

Senator **Dodd**. How many times have you met with senior Nicaraguan officials and which ones?

Mr. **Abrams**. Oh, we meet with them almost on a daily basis. Ambassador Berghold really——

Senator **Dodd**. Oh, I know that Ambassador Berghold does. I'm talking about our Ambassador to the region and the Assistant Secretary of State. We meet with everybody else.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, you know our policy.

Ambassador **Habib**. I stated our policy a little earlier, when you weren't here, Senator.

Under my instructions—and I operate under instructions—my instructions are not to meet with the Sandinistas until they are prepared to meet with their opposition, internally and externally. We conducted a series of meeting with them, my predecessor did, and it was decided to call those meetings to a halt because they were being misused by the Sandinistas.

It is our belief that the Sandinistas would love to make the situation in Central America a bilateral problem between the United States and the Sandinistas.

We believe that the problem is between the Sandinistas and their own people, and the Nicaraguan Government and their neighbors, and that in the first instance, until they are prepared to deal with the problem in that way, we are not prepared to allow them to make it into a bilateral problem.

There are bilateral issues which would then come up, and we would be prepared to meet with them if they were meeting with their own opposition.

That is the position the administration has taken.

So, the answer of why I have not gone to Nicaragua is because I am following instructions.

Now, that permits me to go a little further.

Senator **Dodd**. But my obvious question that I have to ask you is I know that you have instructions. And I know that you are a seasoned negotiator.

Ambassador **Habib**. Let me finish what I was about to say, because it refers to something I was waiting for Senator Kerry to come back to say.

Senator Kerry sort of said, in effect, that I really don't have the right instructions, because, as a negotiator, as a representative of the Government, of the administration, I obviously follow my instructions and the policies of the administration.

Now, that which I wish to change in those instructions and policies I argue inside the administration. I don't argue it elsewhere. I don't make it known elsewhere.

If I have a point of view to express, I express it. And anybody who knows me knows I don't hesitate to express it, and I have done so.

On the other hand, it is not up to me to go out, then, and to alter that policy that has been laid down. If I don't agree with the policy, I have two choices. I can either argue against it and stay, and try to influence it, or I can get out. I have both those choices. At such times as I can't support a policy in perfect honesty and for ethical reasons, I would get out, just like anybody else would.

But in my view, as long as I take the king's shilling, to put it in a literary sense, then I follow the king's policy. There is no other way in which a professional or any other diplomat can function.

Senator **Dodd**. I hear you.

Ambassador **Habib**. I am not an independent soul.

Senator **Dodd**. Elliott, what was the last time you were there? What were you doing there? In what capacity were you there?

Mr. **Abrams**. As Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, in January 1985, I think.

Senator **Dodd**. But not in your present capacity?

Mr. **Abrams**. No, no.

Senator **Dodd**. Again, the reason I bring this up——

Mr. **Abrams**. Though I do meet with the Nicaraguan Ambassador from time to time.

Senator **Dodd**. I understand that.

The reason I bring it up, obviously, and I appreciate your response, Mr. Ambassador, to the question, is, again, the credibility of the policy.

I realize that there are a lot of questions involved. But, clearly, as the Nation which is primarily responsible for sustaining the Contras, which is an essential ingredient in this policy, it raises certainly more than just eyebrows, not only here but around the region—and I think we all know here without going into names that there are people within the administration who believe that this is a fundamental mistake—that we don't even have any contact with the leadership of this government, with whom we are seeking, as a fundamental part of our policy, a negotiated settlement. I think that is a huge mistake.

Mr. **Abrams**. It is really unfair to Ambassador Berghold.

Ambassador **Habib**. We have an ambassador there who has contact with the highest levels. And every time I go to Central America—and I have been there 10 times—I always ask Ambassador Berghold to come out and meet me so that I can sit with him and go over his latest conversations, his latest views, to try to get myself a feeling of what is going on inside the place.

But, by virtue of the policy we have followed, for the reasons that we have given, I don't go to Nicaragua.

When and if the administration changes that policy, then, of course.

Mr. **Abrams**. You know, it is fair to mention that the Secretary of State himself went to Nicaragua in an effort to get talks moving. His conclusion, clearly, was that it didn't work.

Senator **Dodd**. Elliott, we are talking apples and oranges here. I think you know about the person I am talking about—who made the very suggestion to me that you are raising——

Mr. **Abrams**. I'm not.

Senator **Dodd** [continuing]. Who disagrees with the President's approach. I'm not going to go into it.

Ambassador **Habib**. I am not aware of it.

Senator **Dodd**. Then I will tell you privately afterward.

Ambassador **Habib**. I would be interested.

Senator **Dodd**. Let me also raise the press conference, Elliott, that you held the other day at the Executive Office Building, on January 23, when you got into the questions about this bill and the approach. You described the approach which concerns itself with stopping Soviet arms shipments, getting an agreement to stop subverting their neighbors, achieving an agreement to reduce their armed forces, military bases, and the like, as something "incredibly silly."

What I would like to know, in a sense, because what we are driving at here is part of an alternative policy, is whether or not you would consider, in the absence of getting the kind of change you are talking about inside Nicaragua, it would be silly to have no Soviets or Cuban military bases or installations in Nicaragua. Is that silly?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

I stand with the Kissinger Commission report on that.

Senator **Dodd**. Let me just go on. Do you think it is silly to try to eliminate that? Is that silly?

Mr. **Abrams**. It is silly to think that that policy will work, in my view. Yes.

Senator **Dodd**. The point is if you could achieve that, if it were possible to achieve that——

Mr. **Abrams**. But you can't achieve that, and that's what's silly about it.

Senator **Dodd** [continuing]. Now, wait a second. We don't know that yet.

I'm just saying to you if you could. In other words, what you are saying is that you are not prepared, nor is the administration willing, to try to achieve any of those goals in the absence of achieving the kind of fundamental change inside Nicaragua that you and I would both like to see; if you can not achieve both of those, it would be silly to try to achieve these first?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes. To write off Nicaragua as a member of the Communist bloc and condemn the people of Nicaragua to communism is a terrible policy. And that is the proposal—that there is no internal change.

It isn't the proposal in your bill, I recognize that.

Senator **Dodd**. That if you cannot achieve these, short of achieving the internal changes——

Mr. **Abrams**. You cannot, and that is the conclusion of the Kissinger Commission Report, and I think they are right.

Senator **Dodd**. My time is up. I will come back to that.

The **Chairman**. Senator Kerry.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me just pick up on that, if I can, for a minute.

If it is not silly and the alternative is, as you say, the continuance in power of a Sandinista government as a Marxist-Leninist Communist entity, then it seems to me, if you are not willing to accept that goal that Senator Dodd set out as not silly, but as acceptable—I am being really totally circular here. Let me come back at this.

You said in answer to Senator Dodd that "No, it's not silly, but you cannot believe that the Sandinistas are ever going to allow that to happen"—correct—that you couldn't accept that, absent the Contras, you are safeguarding the possibilities of not having Soviet bases there?

Mr. **Abrams**. No, it's not absent the Contras. It is absent an internal change and democratization in Nicaragua. It is in giving up on any internal change in Nicaragua, allowing them to establish a Cuban-style regime, a Soviet-style regime. It is silly to think that they are going to keep these treaties.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me just interrupt my questioning for 1 second.

Mr. Chairman, I want to make a request and I know it has to be timely.

I have discussed this with Senator Dodd.

I would like to request that the markup of Senator Dodd's bill, scheduled for this afternoon, be postponed for 1 week, as per my privilege, if that is possible.

The **Chairman**. All right. In accordance with our custom, the markup scheduled for this afternoon will not take place, and it will be postponed for at least 1 week because we will be out on a recess. It will be rescheduled for shortly after our return.

Senator **Kerry**. I thank the Chair.

The **Chairman**. I would add, I would observe here, too, that, under our custom, there can be only one bite of the apple on this, so that a second request for postponement for a week would not be entertained by the Chair.

Senator **Kerry**. I understand.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I am going to come back to the policy aspects of this, if I can. I have something on my mind that I want to try to finish up first, if I may.

Incidentally, to pick up on Senator Dodd's comment about appropriateness, there is a provision in Senator Dodd's bill for a cutoff of assistance to third countries who provide aid to the Contras. So, how the administration and how the Department has responded in the past to use from third countries and to these kinds of restrictions remains, I think, very important.

Now, Elliott, in the last round of questioning, I asked you about the choosing of the account for the third-country deposit, and you said that you chose it because it was cleaner.

Mr. **Abrams**. I thought it was.

Senator **Kerry**. You thought it was. All right. I just wanted to make certain that we understand why you chose it.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, we were guessing.

Senator **Kerry**. You chose it because you thought it was cleaner.

Mr. **Abrams**. Meaning—if I didn't express it, let me express it—that it was a freestanding account and that it would not be involved in any other activities, which could imaginably be the case with respect to the CIA.

Senator **Kerry**. Does that mean that the account was set up in order to be cleaner?

Mr. **Abrams**. That was my understanding. That was my thought.

Senator **Kerry**. Was it your understanding that the account was set up in order specifically to permit you to ascertain that the money was going to humanitarian purposes?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Kerry**. Yes, it was specifically for that reason?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes. The idea was if you had a separate account, it would be easier to follow. That would be the only thing in it. So, anything that came out of it would be only for humanitarian purposes.

Senator **Kerry**. So it was set up for that purpose?

Mr. **Abrams**. That was my understanding.

Senator **Kerry**. That was your understanding.

Mr. **Abrams**. Right.

Senator **Kerry**. If that is true, then why, according to the testimony of Secretary Shultz in June 1986, did he say you came to him—in June—well prior to setting up this account——

Mr. **Abrams**. No, it wasn't well prior to this.

Senator **Kerry**. I beg your pardon. It was in August or so that you dealt with the account transfer.

Mr. **Abrams**. But the Secretary made a trip to Brunei.

Senator **Kerry**. I beg your pardon?

Mr. **Abrams**. The Secretary made a trip to Brunei.

Senator **Kerry**. I understand.

But in June 1986, Secretary Shultz said that you came to him with a proposal to seek this aid and said at that time that there was a Swiss account that could receive the money, and Secretary of State Shultz approved it at that time.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes. I don't have the dates, but my understanding——

Senator **Kerry**. Let me just finish.

Why did the account—well, the dates are in the intelligence report and they are in the Secretary's testimony, and it says right here in June 1986, Abrams came to Shultz with a proposal to seek such aid, to put it in a Swiss account—already in existence.

Mr. ABRAMS. No.

Do you know when the Secretary visited Brunei?

Senator KERRY. I beg your pardon?

Mr. ABRAMS. Do you know when the Secretary visited Brunei?

Senator KERRY. I know what the report says about when you came to him saying there was already an account in existence.

Mr. ABRAMS. My understanding is that these discussions took place prior to the Secretary's visit to Brunei, and that is why it was necessary to have some place to put the money, in case it became available during that trip.

Senator KERRY. Let me be very precise.

In June 1986, when you went to the Secretary of State, you told him an account existed in Switzerland for the deposit of the money.

Mr. ABRAMS. If that is true, if the dates are right, it is because we discussed this prior to the Secretary's trip, and the possibility of getting the money on that trip arose, and it was necessary therefore to have an account available for it should it become available during his trip. That is the sequence.

And you would need to know the date of the trip, which I don't know—which I don't recall.

Senator KERRY. The account was already in existence, then, that you intended to deposit the money in.

Mr. ABRAMS. It was in existence when the Secretary went to Brunei, as I recall. Actually, I didn't recall it, but I was told this. So you need to know the date of the trip, you see.

Senator KERRY. And what were you told is the primary use of that account——

Mr. ABRAMS. What account?

Senator KERRY [continuing]. That existed in Switzerland?

Mr. ABRAMS. No account existed in Switzerland. I have just told you this, Senator. You are not listening.

Listen to me, please.

The Secretary was making a trip to Brunei. We had had discussions about the possibility of a contribution from Brunei. It is necessary to have a place to put that contribution if it becomes available. So an account is opened. In fact, two are opened.

That is the sequence.

Senator KERRY. Well, two weren't opened at that time.

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes, they were. I believe they were prior to the Secretary's trip. That is my memory.

Again, you can get from the Agency the date on which that other account was opened. They ought to be at the same time.

Again, I did not recall—I did not recall—that there had been discussion of this prior to the Secretary's trip, but this is what I have been told, I think by people from the Intelligence Committee. So you can get more details from them. They have the records.

Senator KERRY. But what I want to pursue is that you were specifically interested in guaranteeing the separateness of the humanitarian aid, correct?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes. It seemed like the most sensible way of trying to keep the money exclusively humanitarian.

Senator **Kerry**. And you knew at that time, obviously, because many of us here were concerned about it, that the Congress was particularly concerned about accountability of humanitarian assistance to the Contras; correct?

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

Senator **Kerry**. And that had been an issue that we had talked about here previously?

Mr. **Abrams**. Right.

Senator **Kerry**. And remains an issue.

Well, on November 10, 1986, Newsday reported that 40 percent of all the flights hired by your Department, under the $27 million program of "humanitarian aid for the Contras were also used to ferry weapons to the rebels," despite the fact that we had restricted that aid.

Mr. **Abrams**. I don't believe that that is correct.

Ambassador Duemling has never said any such thing, and that is the first I have heard of that.

Senator **Kerry**. This is the first you have ever heard of it, right now?

Mr. **Abrams**. The first I've ever heard of it. Ambassador Duemling has kept, I think, pretty close tabs on that, and nobody from the Intelligence Committee or anywhere else has ever suggested such a thing.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, this is a story, and I would just like to ask you about it. An excrewman, "U.S. aid flights to Contras carried 40 percent arms." And it says the crewmember——

Mr. **Abrams**. What is a "U.S.-aid flight?" Can we define that?

Senator **Kerry**. We can try.

Mr. **Abrams**. For example, we bought with the $27 million, substantial amounts of, call it, humanitarian goods in the United States, and they were flown from the United States to Central America. It is my understanding that none of those flights had anything on them but humanitarian goods.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me read it to you so that you can comment on it.

"An operation set up"—this is written by Jim Mulvaney, Newsday staff correspondent—"An operation set up to deliver U.S. Government humanitarian aid to Nicaraguan rebels combined shipments of food and clothing with loads of rifles, ammunition, grenades, and other military hardware according to a former crewmember. The crewmember said he flew dozens of clandestine missions into Nicaragua last spring, during a time when the U.S. Government was prohibited from dealing with military supplies for Contra rebels. The mixing of our arms with humanitarian supplies was well known to U.S. officials in Honduras and El Salvador," he claimed. "A State Department official who was involved with the program said officials in Washington became aware of the mixing and complained to Richard Gadd, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel, who had the contract to deliver the humanitarian supplies."

Do you know Mr. Gadd?

Mr. **Abrams**. No. Never met him.

Senator KERRY. You've never heard of him?

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, I've heard of him now, since this scandal came up.

Senator KERRY. Does he have a contract? Did he have a contract?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't know. The contracting was done by the Humanitarian Aid Office, not by the bureau itself.

Senator KERRY. So, you know nothing at all about the mixing of weapons with humanitarian assistance?

Mr. ABRAMS. I would be willing to state, I think on everything that we have heard from Ambassador Duemling, that flights that went from the United States into Central America did not have mixed cargoes. For one thing, if they had arms on them, they were violating the Arms Export Control Act.

Senator KERRY. My time is up, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, there is nobody else here. So continue.

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes, keep going.

Senator KERRY. Pick up the cudgel.

Well, with respect to that particular story, and your job as the person responsible within the Department for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and knowing of our concern about the mixing, et cetera, did you ever take any steps to ascertain whether or not these were true?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't ever remember seeing that story. But we had, we have—let me use the present tense—full confidence in Ambassador Duemling, who was, I think, preventing that from happening.

I do not believe there were ever any flights from this country to Central America carrying humanitarian goods which had arms on them.

Senator KERRY. Would you please repeat the last statement you just made—there were no flights?

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes. It's just what I said before. I don't think there were——

Senator KERRY. There were no flights?

Mr. ABRAMS. These flights—we bought things in the United States, flew them down there, and those flights——

Senator KERRY. That's not my question. That's what I thought you said and I suddenly said that doesn't fit. I didn't ask you "from the United States." How about from Ilopango Air Base?

Mr. ABRAMS. We have never discussed and will not discuss the location, the locations, in Central America through which aid was provided. However——

Senator KERRY. So, really, now, all of a sudden, we are talking about something different.

Mr. ABRAMS. All right, wait a minute. This is a different question entirely.

Are you asking, if the United States put humanitarian aid into Central America and then it was flown into Nicaragua, were there mixed loads on those flights?

Senator KERRY. On humanitarian assistance flights flown within Central America; correct. Were there mixed loads?

Mr. ABRAMS. From one location to another? I don't believe so.

Senator KERRY. Were there mixed loads?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't think so. I remember the issue being raised, I remember discussions of it with the Intelligence Committees, and I don't believe we did that. I remember it came up, and, as I recall it, the Intelligence Committees didn't want to approve mixed loads. And so, we said "No." That is my memory of it.

But, again, the Intelligence Committee records should show this.

Senator KERRY. Who said "No"?

Mr. ABRAMS. The Department.

Senator KERRY. Did you specifically say "No"?

Mr. ABRAMS. No. I don't recall this. I remember the subject being discussed with the Intelligence Committees. I have a memory, actually, that there were some on the Intelligence Committees who felt that mixed loads were permissible. But my memory is that we decided for political reasons not to do it.

Senator KERRY. Well, who was paying for those flights out of Central America that were carrying humanitarian assistance?

Mr. ABRAMS. If it carried humanitarian assistance, we might have paid for it.

Senator KERRY. OK.

And if it was a mixed load and we were paying for it, then we were also paying for a load that carried military assistance?

Mr. ABRAMS. No, not necessarily.

Senator KERRY. Why not necessarily?

Mr. ABRAMS. Because if the flight was going in, there is a question as to whether, on a space-available basis, it should carry other cargo. That is what we discussed with the Intelligence Committees, and my memory is——

Senator KERRY. If we're paying for the flight—just a minute.

Mr. ABRAMS [continuing]. They said don't do it.

Senator KERRY. Elliott, we are playing games here.

Mr. ABRAMS. I'm not playing games at all.

Senator KERRY. Well, let's not. I really think it's important. I mean, these words, "space-available basis," and all those——

Mr. ABRAMS. If you have a flight going——

Senator KERRY. Just a minute.

We have a flight going in. Taxpayer dollars are paying for it, to give humanitarian assistance. OK. Our flight, our airplane, humanitarian assistance. The U.S. Congress cares intensely about guaranteeing that we're not giving military assistance.

OK. Military aid sneaks on to the flight. Was there a concommitant contribution by the Contras for their proportion of the military aid on the flight?

Mr. ABRAMS. What I'm saying is that it is my——

Senator KERRY. Answer my question.

Mr. ABRAMS. I cannot answer a yes-or-no question when it isn't a yes-or-no question. It is my memory——

Senator KERRY. It is a yes-or-no question. Was there——

Mr. ABRAMS. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to try to answer the question as best I can.

It is my memory, as I have said three times, it is my memory that the issue was discussed with the Intelligence Committees and that they said they did not want mixed loads, and so we said then there won't be any. That's my memory. Maybe I don't remember it right, but the records will tell you what happened.

Maybe the Intelligence Committee staffs can enlighten us on those discussions.

I know, I am pretty sure this subject was discussed with them.

Senator **Kerry**. If there were mixed loads, and it was on planes paid for by U.S. taxpayer dollars for humanitarian assistance, in point of fact, our money also went to support military weapon deliveries; correct?

If that happened, that's correct, isn't it?

Mr. **Abrams**. If it happened, then we were using space that was empty to carry those arms in, that's right, and that is why——

Senator **Kerry**. But, Elliott, you are not answering my question.

Mr. **Abrams**. I can't answer the question.

Senator **Kerry**. Yes, you can.

Mr. **Abrams**. I have told you four times, Senator. You can check with the Intelligence Committees with whom we discussed this. I remember the facts of those discussions, and I remember that there were some people on the Intelligence Committees—it's my memory and maybe it is wrong—who actually thought it was OK to do it.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me ask you the question again.

If the plane were carrying military assistance and it was a plane contracted by us to carry humanitarian assistance, and that is all it is supposed to carry, are not American taxpayer dollars also paying for the delivery of military assistance—yes or no?

Mr. **Abrams**. I would say that that depends on the interpretation of the Intelligence Committees.

If it was their view that this was within the purview of the law, then I think we probably would have been bound by that.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, aren't you responsible for the administration's policy and for the interpretation of the law?

Mr. **Abrams**. Not solely. Of course not, Senator.

Senator **Kerry**. But you are the principal person——

Mr. **Abrams**. No; I'm sorry.

Senator **Kerry**. You are the out-front guy in this area.

Mr. **Abrams**. We try to have a close relationship with those committees, and in the carrying out of that humanitarian program, we consulted them a lot. There were a lot of borderline questions that we took back to the committee.

Senator **Kerry**. Who takes responsibility?

Mr. **Abrams**. For example, what about trucks to carry humanitarian assistance? Is a truck humanitarian assistance?

How about communications equipment?

Senator **Kerry**. I'm talking about guns. I'm talking about ammunition. I'm talking about grenades.

Mr. **Abrams**. And I'm saying that it depends on the interpretation of the committee.

You can badger me all you want. I don't remember it. I don't remember it I'll supply it for the record, and we'll check the written records of the Intelligence Committees, which is going to be much more reliable than my memory.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Senator **Kerry**. Elliott, I am not into badgering witnesses. I don't think I've done it in the 2 years that I've been in here.

But I'm also not into being a patsy, sitting up here, listening to verbosity that doesn't answer a question. It doesn't serve any purpose.

Mr. **Abrams**. I'm not going to give you a "yes" or a "no" answer when I've told you what I can remember and what I can't, and when the record is available to the committee.

Senator **Kerry**. I'm not asking you about your memory. The question was not about what you can remember or can't. I asked you to think and apply the law to this situation. Who is responsible for it? Who is responsible?

Mr. **Abrams**. The interpretation of that law is not in the sole responsibility of somebody in my position. We consulted the committee time after time.

Senator **Kerry**. I'm not asking about sole responsibility. You are the Assistant Secretary of State responsible for this policy.

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, we can go on for 5 more hours. We can check with the committees and we can find out what the facts are. Let's do it.

Senator **Kerry**. Mr. Chairman, I have a lot of other questions. What I am going to do is let Senator Dodd pick up where he was, and I will come back.

The **Chairman**. Senator Dodd, and he will preside for a few minutes while I go over and vote. And then I will be back.

Senator **Dodd** [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me quickly speak to this last point because it has been raised in a couple of other places, Elliott.

To your knowledge, were there any other sources of funding for the Contras——

Mr. **Abrams**. Excuse me.

Let me just say, Senator, for the sake of the record, that we will supply a written answer. I am informed by a member of the staff of the bureau that there were no mixed loads, that the planes were carefully inspected to prevent that from happening.

That is his memory. It is not mine. I want to check for the committee.

So there is an answer that would probably make Senator Kerry happy. But you are not going to get it on the record from me until I know what the facts are.

Senator **Dodd**. Why don't you wait until he comes back, and you can respond accordingly with that particular information.

I would just like to know, and, again, to your knowledge and you know about the Brunei situation, was there any equipment or support, financial or otherwise, support by the Saudis, the Saudi Arabians, or others, that was sent?

Mr. **Abrams**. Not to my knowledge at the time.

Now, I have read the Senate Intelligence Committee report with regard to third-country contributions. That is the section that I did read, and I have been informed of other information by some of the investigators. But some of that I suppose is still classified if the investigation is ongoing.

Senator **Dodd**. Well, he said four countries.

Mr. **Abrams**. Who said?

Senator **Dodd**. Secretary Shultz.

Mr. **Abrams**. Said four countries?

Senator Dodd. The Secretary also reportedly said that the administration had solicited a contribution to the Nicaraguan rebels from four countries. He did not name the countries.

Mr. Abrams. Yes. But that was the administration and not the State Department.

Senator Dodd. What are the other countries?

Mr. Abrams. Pardon?

Senator Dodd. What are the other countries?

Mr. Abrams. What are the four? I don't know who the four are because we were not involved, or I, at least, was not involved in those. This is to say the Department of State was involved in a solicitation to Brunei and to one other country. I don't know whether we have identified the country publicly.

Senator Dodd. Brunei is identified here.

Mr. Abrams. Yes, and there was one other, in which the State Department was involved. Anything beyond that, I only know what I have read in those reports.

As I say, some of the things—it is a little dangerous for me because I have been told some things by the FBI in my discussions with them which they don't, I think, want known publicly. So I am a little bit reluctant to just sort of tell you everything that I know because some of it is probably still classified.

Senator Dodd. Well, since I am now the chairman here, as chairman, I would like to get, if we could, either at Code Word or whatever the proper level is——

Mr. Abrams. That's no problem.

Senator Dodd [continuing]. I'd like to know what the countries were, I'd like to know the amount of money requested, and the amount of money actually supplied.

Mr. Abrams. OK.

Senator Dodd. The reason I bring up that question, in the context of this bill, obviously, is because of the issue of how much the Contras have actually received.

Mr. Abrams. Sure.

Senator Dodd. Obviously we want to know the total amounts.

Mr. Abrams. Sure.

Senator Dodd. Private or public sources, or third-country sources.

Mr. Abrams. We will do our best to get you that. It is not within the knowledge of my bureau for two of the four countries, and I am not sure what is available on that.

But we will certainly go back to Judge Sofaer.

Senator Dodd. But the source of the funds is in your jurisdiction.

Mr. Abrams. Yes—no. No.

Senator Dodd. Well, the Contras would be.

Mr. Abrams. But not the source of the funds.

Senator Dodd. I don't mean the source, but the end, the terminus, if you will.

Mr. Abrams. We will try our best. And I think the person for me to talk to is Judge Sofaer, who is handling this for us.

[The information referred to follows:]

Source of Contra Funding

The Secretary addressed this issue in his testimony before the December 16 closed session of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Information obtained by the

Department of State since that time was transmitted to the Select Committee on Intelligence, which we understand has forwarded all information to the Senate Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition. We refer you to this new select committee for these materials. Any new information obtained by the Department of State regarding this matter will be sent to this committee.

Senator **Dodd**. Last, just in that same regard, during the period in which the Congress did not approve funding for the Contras, to your knowledge, were any U.S. officials, military or civilian officials, involved in any way in the management or direction of supplies from within the Central American region to Contra forces?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, I would have given you a flat "No" up until a couple of weeks ago, when the story appeared alleging involvement by one CIA employee in the region.

Other than that, I think I can still give you a "No" based on my knowledge today.

Senator **Dodd**. Based on your knowledge?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Dodd**. All right.

Let me come back, if I can, now, to some of the policy questions.

Is it still the stated policy of the administration—and, Mr. Ambassador, maybe I will address these to you, but you can jump in, Elliott, at any point you want—is it still the stated position of the administration that it is its intention not to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government?

Ambassador **Habib**. I think the President has made that statement.

Senator **Dodd**. That is still policy?

Ambassador **Habib**. I don't think it has been changed.

Senator **Dodd**. I would like to ask this as a practical question. Elliott, you and I have discussed this privately, but I will bring it up publicly here.

As a practical matter, what we are doing here, as I understand it, now, is to support the Contras to such a degree that they will be militarily effective enough to get the Sandinistas to come to a negotiating table to change their internal politics. This is assuming that they are willing, as they have said, to negotiate on the external security questions, but are unwilling to negotiate any fundamental change inside their own country.

Let me finish my question.

So, our policy is to get the Contras strong enough to the point where the Sandinistas will come to the table, but not so strong so that they would be able to overthrow the Nicaraguan Government.

As a practical matter, when does that occur? How do you get a force so strong that they will take a country to fundamentally change its stated position and yet not so strong that they could overthrow them? And do we really believe that at that particular point, the Contras would not be asking us to not negotiate with the Nicaraguans, but to provide them with whatever additional assistance they may need to topple that government?

Mr. **Abrams**. That is a very good question, and a difficult question.

I think the answer is that under the policy we have, which I think is more widely approved of than the public knows among foreign governments; that is, you put pressure on because they don't want to do what you are asking. They don't want to agree to this democratization.

So, what you are doing is making the Contras more and more potent a force so that more and more of the Sandinistas begin to wonder how long is this going to go on, will we survive, how much of this do we have to take, and it starts changing their minds.

Now, obviously, they don't have one mind. Obviously there are many people in that government and they have, to some extent, differing views. So, I cannot give you a date on which the preponderance of views among the Sandinistas is going to be if this goes on another 2 years, we are gong to lose, so let's make a deal now.

But what we are waiting for is that moment at which enough of them realize that down the road lies ruin. They don't believe that yet.

But, when they believe that, then you have a real shot at concluding a settlement.

Ambassador **Habib**. Putting it briefly, the potential is as important an element of pressure as the actuality. I think one has to remember that, in the early stages, the Sandinistas agreed to certain things which they are not prepared to agree to now. They have changed their minds, or have just decided not to go along that track.

They agreed originally to the 21 objectives. They now would prefer to deal with part of them, or to deal bilaterally with the Costa Ricans or the Hondurans.

Senator **Dodd**. Where have you heard that?

Ambassador **Habib**. Pardon?

Senator **Dodd**. Where have you heard that, Mr. Ambassador?

Ambassador **Habib**. Where have I heard that?

Senator **Dodd**. I asked Daniel Ortega that very question, whether the 21 points was still alive or not. He said absolutely all 21. So I am curious as to where you heard that.

Ambassador **Habib**. Well, let's put it this way.

When the committee came, the foreign ministers of Contadora Support plus the other two, they issued a statement. Ortega issued a statement and presented to the committee proposals which are partial in their nature, which involve bilateral negotiations between himself and the Costa Ricans and the Hondurans to settle border issues, proposals for bilateral negotiations with us.

Senator **Dodd**. Did they change or say they changed the 21 points?

Ambassador **Habib**. No, no. I didn't say they have changed the 21. They have been acting in a manner in which, in effect, they have changed their willingness to deal with the 21 points, because if they weren't, why is it that they have not been willing to negotiate on a political solution?

Now, Mr. Arias is about to present them with a formula of some sort. At least, that is what we can expect to come out of this meeting on February 15. We will see how they respond to that.

I think we are in a process, and so far in the process they have indicated more willingness to deal with certain issues at certain times than with all the issues in a comprehensive fashion with simultaneous implementation. That's a fact.

Senator Dodd. Just reading from this presentation that President Ortega made, the very first point is—and I am sure you have seen it——

Ambassador Habib. To support Contadora.

Senator Dodd. Nicaragua reiterates its categoric support for the peace efforts made by the Contadora and the Lima Support Group.

Ambassador Habib. Of course. Of course.

But he intends it a little bit differently than, say, the Costa Ricans do——

Senator Dodd. But there are two legal cases pending in the International Court of Justice involving territorial disputes between Honduras and Nicaragua and Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Ambassador Habib. And, of course, as you know, the existence of those two cases has detracted from the negotiating process, and he has been urged, Ortega has been urged by a number of Latin Americans to drop the cases so that proper negotiations can then take place.

Mr. Abrams. If it is the case that President Ortega is unwilling to consider internal change within Nicaragua, then he is not for Contadora because Contadora calls for democratization, guarantees of human rights within each country.

He cannot have it both ways.

Senator Dodd. Let me go back to the initial question that I asked in this round, which had to do, again, with how the administration's policy is to work.

General Gorman, before the Armed Services Committee of the Senate the other day, was asked whether the Contras were a militarily viable force against the Sandanistas. In my conversations with senior military officials from the four countries of Central America, I asked the question of whether the Contras—and I don't mean just today, but in the foreseeable future—even assuming a continuation of the levels of support from the U.S. Congress to be maintained, were militarily a viable force against the Sandinistas.

Now, General Gorman's public testimony was "No." Every military, senior military official, that I asked in all four democratic countries of Central America, with the exception of one senior military official in El Salvador, reached the same conclusion.

Does either of you have a different opinion?

Mr. Abrams. Sure. And, more to the point, so does General Galvin, who is the U.S. Commander in Chief in the Southern Command.

Senator Dodd. What was General Gorman?

Mr. Abrams. Pardon?

Senator Dodd. What was he?

Mr. Abrams. He was in that position some years ago, and said in the testimony to which you refer that he hadn't been briefed on where we are in 2 years.

But let's get back to the point of your question.

There are a lot of "weasel" words that they use and that are around. A "viable force"—what's a viable force?

If the question is can they win a straight-out military victory such as we won in World War II, then the answer is "Nobody is thinking about that." This is a political struggle with a military component. It is not a fundamentally military struggle.

Senator DODD. I mean to get them to the point, Elliott, that we talked about in the first question.

Mr. ABRAMS. OK. If we are defining it that way, strong enough to achieve those political goals——

Senator DODD. To get them to a negotiating table.

Mr. ABRAMS. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Are they today? No, because the program is 10 weeks old on the ground.

Senator DODD. All right.

In what timeframe—and I am not going to try to nail you down to a year or to a dollar amount——

Mr. ABRAMS. I actually answered that question.

Senator DODD. But what are you talking about here?

Mr. ABRAMS. I answered the question, a slightly different question, with 2 to 4 years. But this is a different question because there are other variables that have to be taken into account. For example, levels of Soviet aid.

You know, we don't control all of the variables.

Senator DODD. We know the Soviets have been pouring in aid, and there is no indication that they are likely to stop. I am assuming that variable.

Mr. ABRAMS. Well, the question is they have been pouring in aid last year, before we were giving aid to the resistance. Are they going to double it again?

Senator DODD. Well, you have to factor that in.

Mr. ABRAMS. But that's the question. I can't answer you.

Senator DODD. Well, let's factor that in because that is certainly a feasible conclusion.

Mr. ABRAMS. But you don't know at what level the aid will be and, therefore, you don't know in what condition the Sandinistas will be.

Senator DODD. Well, we have seen it in Angola. So we have an example. We know what has happened in Angola. We know that the Soviets, rather than pulling back, have increased. Isn't that true?

Mr. ABRAMS. But you can't answer the question about Afghanistan either.

Senator DODD. No, Angola.

Mr. ABRAMS. All right, take Angola. I don't know when there will be a negotiated settlement in Angola or Afghanistan.

Senator DODD. But wait, that's not my——

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't know of any Senator who said——

Senator DODD. Elliott, we are jumping all over.

Mr. ABRAMS. But we are not jumping all over. You are asking when can we reach a political settlement, and the answer is it is not clear——

Senator DODD. Elliott, I am asking——

Mr. ABRAMS [continuing]. Anymore than it is in Afghanistan.

Senator DODD. Elliott, really, you try the patience of people. What I am trying to get you to focus on a bit here is, is it reasonable—is it reasonable—to assume, obviously, that the Soviets are going to increase aid to the Nicaraguans if we increase support for the Contras?

Is that unreasonable, given their behavior otherwise?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, and the question is how much. That is the question.

Senator **Dodd**. Ambassador Habib.

Ambassador **Habib**. I have no independent judgment in that respect, Senator, of what is reasonable and what is unreasonable. It depends on a whole multitude of things—at what point may or may not they decide that they have other interests with us which may lead them to change their policy toward the support of Sandinistas and Cubans and anybody else in Central America.

You know, we have gone through this with the Russians on other occasions, where they decide at a given point to do something differently than they were doing, because they have another interest in another negotiation with us.

I can recall a number of instances in the past, and I am sure you can also.

It seems to me that the answer to your question really does not lie in trying to predict 2, 3, or 4 months.

I think it is very important, as I said earlier, that we maintain a viable, credible peace process, and that we maintain that opportunity for the Sandinistas to change their ways in dealing with their own people and dealing with their neighbors in a context which gives them some assurances, some rules to behave by, and some support from the people who negotiate it, mainly through the Contadora process.

That is the value of Contadora.

The Contadora in a way is a protection for them as well as it is for the Central American democracies. So what has to be agreed to are the terms and conditions of bringing a change about in Central America. That is what Contadora is supposed to do.

It hasn't been able to do it up until now. And I would argue, quite honestly, that the reason it has not been able to do it fundamentally lies in the intransigence of the Sandinistas, who don't want to make those necessarily political changes that are called for by Contadora, and who also are reluctant to really accept even the military changes that are required by Contadora. The evidence of that is clear.

The evidence, for example, is in their response to the proposals made I think it was by the Hondurans and the Guatemalans as to how to limit arms and forces. The Sandinistas came up with a formula which would allow them to keep everything they have, and they would get rid of things that they don't have.

I mean, that is the sort of negotiation that has been going on up to this point.

Now, there is a process going on.

I would like to see Contadora not only revived, I would like to see it get more active to deal with all those issues.

Senator **Dodd**. Can the Contras, in the absence of U.S. support, persist in their military struggle?

Mr. **Abrams**. Most of them I think will try. Yes. I think they will.

They will try to get support from other governments or from private citizens. They will get some. They don't really have any place to go. If Nicaragua is going to be a Communist country, they are not going to go home.

So, I think they will fight on—some will fight on.

Again, how many is unclear.

But the idea that it would collapse overnight I think would be wrong.

Senator **Dodd**. It would not collapse in your opinion in the absence of that support?

Mr. **Abrams**. It would not collapse overnight, no.

Senator **Dodd**. Ambassador Habib.

Ambassador **Habib**. I don't concern myself with judgments of what the Contras could do if they had to in those circumstances. I have no competence to answer a question like that.

He knows the situation better than I do. I would rather leave that kind of question to Elliott. I mean, horseback opinions on my part on things like that are really not worthy of this committee.

Senator **Dodd**. Elliott, let me ask you this.

If on February 15 the four Central American countries called for a cease-fire and called for the Contra forces to pull back from Nicaragua, what would be the response of the United States, of the administration?

Mr. **Abrams**. Let me make sure I understand—if the call is for a cease-fire?

Senator **Dodd**. And for the Contra forces to pull back.

Are we talking about where the Contra forces are? I mean, everybody knows where they are. Are we saying publicly where they are, or where the bulk of them are?

The Nicaraguans know where they are.

Mr. **Abrams**. The bulk of them today are in Nicaragua, but there are significant numbers still in Honduras.

Senator **Dodd**. We are saying that?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, the Government of Honduras has said that there are Nicaraguan resistance fighters there, and that they are not to expend their—this is a letter——

Senator **Dodd**. You went down there recently and saw the Contras.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Dodd**. I saw some of them. We know where their major camps are.

Mr. **Abrams**. Were. You know, some of those camps are closed down because people are going back into Nicaragua.

Senator **Dodd**. Going back. OK. Please go ahead with the question.

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, the answer is it is extremely hard to think of an agreement which the four Central Americas would like which we would not also like. But it's possible. In other words, we wouldn't write a blank check.

If they signed an agreement that said and it's also fine with us that the Soviets have a submarine base, then we would not automatically say it is all right with us.

Senator **Dodd**. But that's not what I asked.

Mr. **Abrams**. If there is a reasonable agreement that the four of them support it and that they think it guarantees their security, we would be very inclined to support it. Absolutely.

Ambassador **Habib**. In all my conversations with them, and I have had a lot, I have never really come to the conclusion that what they want is incompatible with our objectives. The four, that what they would like to see is incompatible with us.

Now there are differences between the four, as you know. You can count them as three plus one, you can count them as two and one-half plus one, you can count them as three and a one-half, et cetera. There are various ways of counting them, depending on which issues you use as the benchmarks of how to line them up.

But the important thing is that they are willing to seek a harmonious position and to produce a unified position. That is something new.

The reason they are able to do it, in my opinion, very frankly, is because they have democratized.

Senator DODD. I agree with that.

Ambassador HABIB. So you have civilian leadership, all of whom, I am sure you agree with me, are responsible, respectable, and properly elected.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Ambassador HABIB. The aberration in Central America is Nicaragua. It is not the four democracies.

That is why it is so easy for us to be compatible with their views.

I would like to see exactly what they come out with before I would really say, because your answer is not going to be what they come out with—your question. It is going to be much more complicated than that, much more involved. I'd like to know how is it linked to Contadora.

You will recall that I said to you earlier the only two things we suggested to Mr. Madrigal was that, one, that they make clear the unity of the Central American democracies with respect to what they are proposing—in other words, get them on board, not just us; and then, second, to define its link to Contadora, because I don't think we want to see Contadora abrogated, boycotted, or whatever you want to call it.

We are not in the business of bringing an end to Contadora, and neither should they be, and they agree. There is no disagreement with us on that part.

Senator DODD. Part of this bill calls for $300 million in authorization.

Ambassador HABIB. And if you want to make it $500 million, it would be even better.

Senator DODD. Well, how about the administration?

Ambassador HABIB. I am thinking in terms of every time I come back from Central America and I write my report, I always add a sentence on the end of the report which has nothing to do with what I am supposed to do, in which I say, in effect, for God's sake, we ought to give the democracies of Central America an awful lot more assistance than they are getting.

This is a crucial battle.

Senator DODD. Well, you and I both know that every conversation you have—and I am sure you have been reminded as I have——

Ambassador HABIB. That's right.

Senator DODD [continuing]. About the $300 million that we blew, that the Congress blew.

Ambassador **Habib**. Well, if you would drop everything else in the bill and come up with the $300 million, we would be up here testifying in favor of it.

Senator **Dodd**. Well, what I want to know is, is there a supplemental coming——

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Dodd** [continuing]. From the administration?

Mr. **Abrams**. There will be a supplemental which will have this $300 million in it. Absolutely.

Senator **Dodd**. It will.

Roughly, when will that be forthcoming?

Mr. **Abrams**. I can't give you a date.

Senator **Dodd**. In the next 2 or 3 months?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, something like that.

Senator **Dodd**. So, it's soon, not later?

Mr. **Abrams**. Soon. It's not going to come in the last week of the fiscal year or something like that.

Senator **Dodd**. And it will be broadly defined as economic assistance to the Central American countries.

Mr. **Abrams**. That's right. And it is authorized already, so we don't need an authorization.

All we need is an appropriation.

Senator, I just want to go back to one point, which I don't think came through to you.

Senator **Dodd**. Excuse me, but my staff has just told me that that is authorized in the CR, or was in the CR, which was in the appropriations bill.

Mr. **Abrams**. It is authorized, I think, the whole Kissinger Commission money is authorized so that——

Senator **Dodd**. Well, let them talk about that later.

Mr. **Abrams**. All right.

We have had lots of discussions about Western support for the guerrillas in Afghanistan, the goal of which is a political settlement there. And no one ever says to my knowledge if you can't give me the date on which that political settlement ought to be achieved, then we ought to stop doing it.

If the goal is right—if—and if the method of reaching the goal is right—if—then the fact that we can't tell you when it's going to happen shouldn't kill the program. That is the analogy I would draw to Nicaragua.

Senator **Dodd**. First of all, I would be very careful about drawing too tight an analogy between the fact situation in Afghanistan and the fact situation in Central America. But since you have drawn that one, many of us believe that if all outside foreign assistance for the Mujahedeen were to dry up in the next 5 minutes, I don't know of any person who I have ever met who believes for 1 second that the Mujahedeen wouldn't fight to the last person.

I frankly would tell you, Elliott, that I don't know of many people outside of the administration who believe the same is true of the Contras, with the exception of a handful. That is a fundamental distinction.

If we end up cutting off the funds, most people believe that that is the end of it, because this is our creation, it is our game, and once we stop the financial support for it, outside of those people who feel very strongly about it—and there are some; I am not arguing that they are not there—as far as a fighting force, many, many people who don't embrace or support the Sandinistas don't believe that the Contras will continue.

It is a fundamental difference.

Mr. **Abrams**. There is a difference.

I think, clearly, not everybody would fight on because their fight would be doomed.

Senator **Dodd**. Well, with the Mujahedeen, after all, they are fighting the Soviet army, not a Sandinista army.

Mr. **Abrams**. And how would they be doing, for example, if they did not have some capability to deal with the Soviet helicopters, which has changed the war?

Senator **Dodd**. I am not arguing about whether or not they could take them on.

My point to you is they are willing to lose every life—every life. I don't think you could look me in the eye and tell me that the same case would be for the Contras. That is a fundamental difference in the minds of many, many people in this country, and many people in Central America.

Mr. **Abrams**. Senator, you have been down there. You have seen some of those 18-, 17-, 15-, 19-year-old fighters. They could all be in Miami, and they don't want to be. They want to fight, and take the risk.

Senator **Dodd**. I'm not sure they could all be in Miami.

Mr. **Abrams**. You know, people have managed to find ways to get over there.

Senator **Dodd**. You know, these folks are not going to afford to live in Miami.

Mr. **Abrams**. No, no. The Nicaraguan community in Miami has plenty of refugees, and San José.

Senator **Dodd**. I understand. The alternative, you know, is settling in Las Vegas or Dade County.

Ambassador **Habib**. There is always Danbury.

Senator **Dodd**. Yes, there is Danbury, too. [Laughter.]

Mr. Chairman, am I out of time?

The **Chairman** [presiding]. No. I thought what we would do is for you to finish up and then for Senator Kerry to finish up. And then we might break.

Senator **Dodd**. Thank you.

Elliott, one other thing.

You were very gracious. You and I had a nice private meeting. You walked into my room and the first thing you said to me, unsolicited, was how we conducted ourselves on the trip to Central America.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes, absolutely.

Senator **Dodd**. Then I picked up yesterday's paper, or the local Washington Times, and I don't know if you saw the article which excoriates the Members of Congress going down, and claims I have been highly critical of my Government, and so forth—which I never was.

Mr. **Abrams**. I am aware of that. I have all the cables.

Senator **Dodd**. And yet, I see these articles.

The reason I bring it up is this.

When I was in Honduras, every other Ambassador in Central America, when I specifically asked that I would like to spend some time with each of the heads of state alone, privately, without exception, in four of the countries, they were very helpful in that regard, very helpful.

Mr. ABRAMS. Though reluctant, I think, in at least one other case.

Senator DODD. One was a little reluctant, but he also had a problem with translations, I believe. But in other cases, they were very helpful, very supportive.

In the case of Honduras, I was specifically told by our Ambassador in Honduras that he was in possession of a cable, as a result of Senator Helms' visit to Chile, which had instructions to all Ambassadors that no Member of Congress was to meet alone with a head of state.

Do you know of such a cable?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't know of such a cable. I wouldn't have sent it, of course. I don't have the power to send such a cable.

Senator DODD. Well, I couldn't find one in any other country I was in either.

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't know of such a cable.

Senator DODD. Is that the policy? Is that a new policy?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't believe it is. It is something that we don't like for obvious reasons.

Senator DODD. I understand that. That is not the issue.

Ambassador HABIB. But how could we control with whom they meet? This goes back over 40 years of experience.

Senator DODD. Embassies may give Congressmen a lesson in manners.

Mr. ABRAMS. Wait a minute. You have to look at what the cable said, a cable which, presumably, was leaked, because I assume it was a confidential cable.

Not everybody, Senator—and I meant every word I said to you in your office—and not everybody has done what you did, that is to say, go down to anyplace, go to any foreign country, talk to people, find out, and if you have a criticism to make of U.S. policy, come back here, as a Senator, and make it, and introduce a bill.

Not everybody does that.

So we did send out a cable, because this is a problem. It is a problem for foreigners, as you know better than I, the multiple voices coming out of Washington. There is no easy solution to the problem. And, in fact, they have to learn our system, in which the administration does not have exclusive control over foreign policy.

Senator DODD. What does the cable say?

Mr. ABRAMS. The cable says, I think, that the Embassy should say to the Members of Congress something along the lines I just said: This question of multiple voices is a bad problem for foreign governments, and it is probably not a good thing for Members of Congress to attack U.S. policy abroad to foreign governments. The attack should be made at home to get the policy changed.

I think that is appropriate.

Senator DODD. But if a Congressman or a Senator would make a request to see someone on their own——

Mr. ABRAMS. I know of no such cable.

Senator **Dodd**. May I get a copy of the cable that was sent out?

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

Do you mean the cable that was referred to in that article?

Senator **Dodd**. Yes.

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

Senator **Dodd**. I guess. Are there any others that I don't know about?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, the other one, as I said, but a cable saying that no Member of Congress can meet with a head of state alone—I know of no such cable.

Senator **Dodd**. Will you work on that for me?

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

Handling of CODEL's

Although we discussed the idea of sending a cable to the posts regarding how to handle CODEL's that wished to exclude Embassy personnel from meetings with host government officials, no cable had been sent at the time of the testimony. We did, however, inform Ambassador Briggs orally of the Department's position on this matter.

Senator **Dodd**. I was literally told by Ted Briggs. That was his statement to me in our residence.

I will come back, but I believe Senator Kerry has some additional questions.

The **Chairman**. Senator Kerry, just for making plans, how much longer do you think we will be?

Ambassador **Habib**. You know, I've never even heard of such an instruction.

Senator **Dodd**. You know, it violates the separation of powers and all that.

Ambassador **Habib**. And I'd hate to be the one to try to enforce that.

Senator **Dodd**. And Ambassador Berghold said I don't want to go with you.

The **Chairman**. Senators, how much longer do you think you will be?

Senator **Dodd**. Not too much longer.

Senator **Kerry**. I won't be too much longer, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate your patience very, very much.

I also appreciate, Mr. Ambassador, yours, and, Mr. Secretary, yours.

I understand that Arturo Cruz is down in Puerto Rico—incidentally, I do have other questions with respect to the other matters.

Senator **Dodd**. By the way, you may want to respond to John now that he is back.

Mr. **Abrams**. That's right.

Senator, after you left, a member of the bureau staff——

Senator **Kerry**. I heard that. He said that they didn't mix.

Mr. **Abrams**. In other words, that the Newsday article was dead wrong.

Now, I cannot tell you that on my own hook. I want to check. But that is the information that I am given, that it is just plain false.

Senator **Kerry**. I will accept that at face value. But the evidence is so overwhelming and compelling from so many different sources about what has been going on that, unless people are just not wanting to hear it, not wanting to see it, not wanting to deal with it, it is very hard to believe that people aren't aware of what has been happening.

And I think all of this will come out as time goes on, so I am happy to move on to another area.

Mr. **Abrams**. You really ought to get Ambassador Duemling up here to testify on this question.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, I will. I am sure that at some point in time he and many others, including crewmembers and people who have been on these airplanes and other people are going to be talking about it. Evidently, they already are. But some people don't place much credibility in it.

You know, I used to be a prosecutor, and in the course of learning about trials, we learned about something called "the declaration against interest." A declaration against interest has fair validity when you are judging the competency of evidence. There ain't a lot in it for some guy to say "Yeah, I was on an airplane and I was on 15 missions and I was breaking the law and doing this" and subjecting himself to a whole bunch of things.

Now I have not found yet what's in it. I don't know who is suggesting that it is a good idea for him to say these things. If someone can show me why, what it is, I will listen.

Mr. **Abrams**. At any rate, I would like to supply a further answer for the record. But the bureau staff informs me that the Newsday story is false and that Ambassador Duemling flatly prohibited mixed loads.

Senator **Kerry**. Fine.

Is there any internal memorandum or any documents with respect to policy as to that?

Mr. **Abrams**. Probably.

Senator **Kerry**. I would love to see what was set down.

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes.

Senator **Kerry**. That would be great.

[The information referred to appears in the appendix.]

Senator **Kerry**. Let us move on to another area.

What I would like to do, Elliott, is ask you if you might be kind enough to visit with me privately in my office at some point in the next couple of weeks so that we can sit down and talk about some of these other things and see if we can't work on them mutually.

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me ask some policy questions also.

I was about to say that I understand Arturo Cruz is about to resign. I hear that he is in Puerto Rico.

Mr. **Abrams**. I think he is here.

Senator **Kerry**. Or maybe he is here. I don't know. If he is here, maybe you guys are chatting with him, hoping that he won't, but I heard that he is about to resign.

I understand that at a recent graduation ceremony of new Contra recruits in Florida, after training, that there was a fiery speech by Alfonso Robelo. The recruits all had UNO shoulder patches on and rope bracelets to establish esprit de corps, and he talked about civilian control. Enrique Bermudez was infuriated by that, and they all had to tear the patches off and get rid of the bracelets. According to the story, Bermudez was worried about anti-FDN concepts that were being taught.

Now, a few months ago, you suggested that there was a major reform of the Contra leadership. They had a unity meeting, and this was hailed as a major reform——

Mr. ABRAMS. In May?

Senator KERRY. Yes, the May meeting, precisely.

Now, here we are, and we are back with the internal leadership tearing at each other.

How are these guys going to present either a unified military front or a unified political front, particularly a political front to accomplish the goals you are talking about internally in Nicaragua?

Mr. ABRAMS. First just on Cruz, I don't know whether he is going to resign. I certainly hope he is not.

Senator KERRY. But nobody disputes that he is talking about it——

Mr. ABRAMS. Oh, sure, he is talking about it.

Senator KERRY [continuing]. And he wants to.

Senator DODD. Was John's characterization of what happened with the new recruits accurate?

Mr. ABRAMS. It is partly accurate.

There was a training course in which, in an effort to show the recruits—well, they are not recruits actually; they have been around a long time; but let's call them the trainees—the kinds of political image that they had, things were used, like an article from Time magazine comparing Ortega and Bermudez. They hit them very hard on these questions of civilian control of the military.

Some people—and I want to emphasize "some" in the FDN did think that this was not an effort to exert civilian control over the military; but it was an effort to crush the FDN, which is not the purpose of the training.

They said what's going on here, and why are you comparing Bermudez and Ortega, which you can see would be rather offensive.

I don't believe they were right; that is, as we have looked at the training——

Senator KERRY. That who was right?

Mr. ABRAMS. I don't believe the FDN was right.

As we have looked at the training, OK. I'm sure it wasn't perfect and maybe it needs to be redesigned because you are not dealing with a well-educated group of trainees. In some cases, you are dealing with illiterates.

Senator KERRY. Incidentally, are we only just learning that?

Mr. ABRAMS. What?

Senator KERRY. The kind of people that we are dealing with in terms of trainees?

Mr. ABRAMS. Of course not. No.

Senator KERRY. Well, who designed the program?

Mr. ABRAMS. The program was designed at first, well, the question of who precisely designed it is not for an open hearing. It was designed and redesigned and is being redesigned with each iteration of the training, to come up against exactly this.

I think as I said that the course was a good one, not a bad one. I think that they were wrong, and the course, as it is redesigned, is not going to look very different.

I want to come back to Cruz for a minute.

I hope he does not resign. I hope very much he does not resign. I can think of no one who has attained his degree of reputation as a symbol of democracy for Nicaragua. And your suggestion that I was trying to persuade him not to resign is absolutely correct. I plead guilty. I very much hope he does not resign.

But, what he says privately and what just about every other resistance leader says privately—and in the last couple of weeks, I think I have talked to almost everybody—is that they want to expand the UNO directorate. I think that is fine. I just hope that an expanded UNO directorate has Arturo Cruz in it.

I mean, they want to choose other leaders in addition, and that's great, that's their decision. But we very much hope that Cruz does not quit.

Senator **Kerry**. I'm sure you do. I have no doubt about that.

But I come back to my question.

You know, I listened to you about the design of these programs and your comment was well, we made a mistake, we were not sort of accurate on how the people were we were dealing with.

You know, I didn't arrive in Vietnam until 1968, and there had been a lot going on before I got there. But I sure remember going out on SIOPS and this and that and they were still designing it, and then they were designing it in 1972, and, finally, we all know the history.

I don't know. I have a real deja vu in listening to you say we haven't designed the right one yet.

Mr. **Abrams**. This is a first iteration, remember that. This just started.

Senator **Kerry**. It's just getting started. That's exactly what I'm worried about.

But let me come back to the point I am making.

The real question is here we are, with a political leadership totally divided. These are the big guys.

Mr. **Abrams**. It's not totally divided. I wouldn't accept that.

Senator **Kerry**. You don't accept that? You just said it.

Mr. **Abrams**. No, no.

What I said was that I hope Cruz doesn't resign, and that also every leader I have talked to—and it's just about every——

Senator **Kerry**. That's not divided, a guy thinking about resigning, who is one of the mainstays?

Mr. **Abrams**. Well, let me finish.

They are all united, first of all, on the need to maintain this struggle, and I think it is fair to say that they are united on the need to have a broader directorate of UNO. That seems to be the case.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, we are all united on the need to do something about the Sandinistas. The big issue is what; correct?

Mr. **Abrams**. Yes and no.

Senator **Kerry**. You don't think we are? You don't think we want to do something about them?

Mr. **Abrams**. But I think we are much more divided than they are, frankly.

Let me come back to your original question.

You will never get the kind of unity that you have in Managua, and thank God. This is because we don't believe in democratic centralism. We don't believe in Leninism.

You do know that what Castro does with resistance movements in the Communists is to smash them together in one group. That will never happen to the resistance.

Senator **Kerry**. Elliott, you are a better student of history, I hope, than that, to make that kind of comment.

I mean, this country in World War II and in other periods of its history—come on now.

Mr. **Abrams**. Name a democratic resistance movement that——

Senator **Kerry**. To say that the United States as a democratic, pluralistic society didn't have unity and purpose is just——

Mr. **Abrams**. That isn't what I said.

They don't have a government. They are not a country. They are a widely varying group. I mean, the UNO assembly that met in San José recently had, I think, 13 different groups represented, who used to be in the business of political combat against each other in Nicaragua and would love to be in that business again. And it is our goal that they be in that business again.

And it is difficult for them to cooperate, but they are doing it. And I think they are going to continue to do it.

Senator **Kerry**. So you aren't disturbed, at the moment, you have no——

Mr. **Abrams**. Oh, I am disturbed by the idea that Cruz might quit.

Senator **Kerry**. And you think that we should not feel sanguine about appropriating additional money—in this case not, not cutting it off or stopping it, but ultimately there will be more requests—and you think we should not feel sanguine in the face of the state of the leadership that all is well, and that it is OK to just pour the money in——

Mr. **Abrams**. No, no.

Senator **Kerry** [continuing]. Because it is clear in terms of purpose where they are going?

Mr. **Abrams**. Not today, because what they are doing, as I understand it——

Senator **Kerry**. Then why shouldn't we stop it today, if it is not? Why shouldn't we wait until it is clear, until we have a sense of the politics?

Mr. **Abrams**. Secretary Shultz has talked often about this kind of light switch business, where our policy changes on an overnight basis.

They all believe—I really have not come up against one Nicaraguan who does not think this—that it is time to have a broader, more political UNO directorate, and that is what they are doing.

It is going to take them a few days, or weeks, to do it. The idea that we should abandon the people who are risking their lives right now in Nicaragua because UNO is going to have a broader directorate I don't think makes sense.

Senator KERRY. Well, my interpretation is that when one of three is leaving, that is a narrowing and not a broadening.

Mr. ABRAMS. It is. That is why they want to broaden it. I mean, they all agree that it is time to broaden it.

Senator KERRY. And you want to keep it the way it is. We will see whether it gets broadened.

Mr. ABRAMS. Who wants to keep it the way it is?

Senator KERRY. Well, if you keep the three of them there, it's status quo.

Mr. ABRAMS. No, that is not what I want. I want Arturo Cruz to stay in it.

Senator KERRY. That's right. That's three.

Mr. ABRAMS. No. The decision to have a broader directorate is their decision. They all seem to agree on that.

His staying with it does not mean that there has to be a three-man directorate.

Senator KERRY. There is one other area that I really want to pursue, so let me see if we can get at it. I have trouble with this one, both in the debates on the floor and in our efforts to deal with this issue. It concerns the theory of it.

You have argued and you continue to argue and supporters of yours continue to argue that the Contras are a critical pressure point in order to force the Sandinistas to negotiate.

Correct?

Mr. ABRAMS. Yes.

Senator KERRY. OK.

But then, in the next breath, you and others say the Sandinistas will never negotiate what we want because we have set up this goal which is pluralistic, democratic, and so on.

Now, you yourself have said they will never negotiate away their power or existence; is that correct?

Mr. ABRAMS. No. They will never negotiate without pressure. They will never negotiate if left to their own devices.

Senator KERRY. All right—if left to their own devices. That is where we need to examine it. Let's keep going down this path, then.

With the Contras in place—let me step back a bit.

The June 9 agreement, or whatever the June date was——

Mr. ABRAMS. June 6.

Senator KERRY. June 6.

What is your interpretation of why it was that could not be signed?

Ambassador HABIB. Well, each of the Central American countries made their views known with respect to the agreement.

Each of them had slightly different reasons. But, put together, first of all, some of them didn't like it because it did not sufficiently deal with the political questions. It was not precise.

Others, and the same ones, maybe, didn't like it because there was not sufficient provision for verification. There were statements about verification, but nothing was done about organizing for verification.

Third, there were some elements which were left for later negotiations, for example, the armaments question was left. That was to be taken up at a later date. They want the thing to be taken up at the same time so that agreement on all the issues is reached at the same time.

Those are the three factors, the three criteria, that I cited which were not met. It was neither comprehensive, neither simultaneous, nor verifiable.

Each of the Central Americans put this formally in letters to Contadora and indicated, therefore, that there was necessity for further negotiation. And during the recent visit of the foreign ministers, that, basically, was the message that was given, that we don't like the present draft because it does not meet all the criteria and, second, we think there is necessity for more intimate negotiations, taking more into account our views.

The Central Americans have felt in the past, and partly rightly, that, to a certain extent, they were only listened to up to a point, and then they didn't have a real chance to work on the draft, so to speak.

I am sure you have heard them say the same things on your own.

Senator **Kerry**. I have.

Incidentally, I want the record to show that I think there were problems of verification in there, and implementation. And I do not disagree with that. But what disturbs me is this, and I would like to ask you about it.

Was there ever a suggestion made by us that if we were able to work out those problems, specifically the signing, simultaneous issue, and when you are going to have implementation of verification—is it going to be in place at the start, so you can tell what's happening, which is a legitimate concern—but was there a return response from us that said, and this goes back to your letter issue—if you do these things, we will not give aid to the Contras?

Now, I don't believe there ever was. Let me just finish the thought and then ask for your comment.

Without that, it seems to me perfectly legitimate for any country concerned about its borders and concerned about warfare to suggest they are getting the short end of the deal if they had to reduce their military, they had to adhere to limitations on the size of their army, they have to limit their area for maneuvers, they have to adhere to other things, but the other guy isn't going to stop funding these guerrillas who were shooting the hell out of them.

Ambassador **Habib**. As a matter of fact, it is my understanding that the law, in effect, would prohibit us.

Senator **Kerry**. It doesn't do that. I have read it very closely. The Contadora Agreement——

Ambassador **Habib**. I said the law.

Senator **Kerry**. Oh, the law.

Ambassador **Habib**. Second of all, do you really believe that we would endorse an agreement and then violate it?

Senator **Kerry**. Just a minute. Let me ask you this.

Ambassador **Habib**. I presume that we would endorse, in effect, we would abide.

Senator **Kerry**. Which law do you mean? Which law doesn't allow us to do that?

Ambassador **Habib**. The law approving the $100 million.

Senator KERRY. But are you suggesting to me that if President Reagan came to the Congress and said "I've almost got a deal will you guys suspend," that he couldn't do that, that he couldn't, by Executive order, not——

Ambassador HABIB. No, no. On the contrary. My understanding is if we were to get an agreement and it was an agreement which we would abide by and one which was acceptable to the Central Americans—in other words, if it were going into effect—that would be the end.

Senator KERRY. But what I am saying is you have this catch-22. You get this vicious circle.

Ambassador HABIB. But there is no catch-22. In my mind there is not.

Senator KERRY. Well, I have heard it enough from the presidents of these countries, and particularly from President Ortega and from the Ambassador, from the foreign minister, that their concern is that they view themselves as being put into a position where they are the ones who have to do all of the giving and the adherence, but the Contras are going to continue to be funded, and they simply don't trust that.

Ambassador HABIB. Well, I don't know what they mean by "funded." I mean, whether or not we would provide food to the forces that exist, that is another question. It all will depend on the nature of the agreement.

As I envisage the agreement, the agreement would come about and would include certain things happening even before agreement.

One of the things you would have to have resolved is the question of such things as what are the political processes that are going to then take hold as a result of the agreement. What are the dates for certain things. That is what Arias keeps talking about. You need a calendar, and he is right.

And also what about the question of a cease-fire. How do you arrange a cease-fire?

Look, I have arranged a lot of cease-fires in my miserable career, including, I remember, I arranged 11 that did not work in Lebanon, until I got the 12th one that did work long enough to do something.

A cease-fire is not an easy thing to arrange, because you have to have the terms, you have to have the conditions, you have to decide is the cease-fire in place, what place, what about supplies, what about communications, can you move, where can you move. All of these are going to have to be worked out.

One of the elements that makes dialog so important in a peaceful settlement is because in order to resolve these issues, all of the people involved should be on board, including the Contras, including the internal opposition, including the Central American democracies.

Remember, the agreement that is envisaged is not with one country. The agreement is an agreement for Central America. The obligations that the others take on—it is not one sided. It isn't what the Sandinistas have to do and nothing else that anybody else has to do.

All the others have obligations. All of the other Central Americans have obligations.

Now, the reason that the demands put upon the Sandinistas appear to be greater than the obligations put on the others derives simply from one factor, the democratization factor. The others are willing to limit their armaments and their forces within a formula to be established within the agreement. The Hondurans and Guatemalans even came up with a very elaborate formula in which you factor your elements, you give them points and so on.

So I don't see any problem in terms of what would happen if you got an agreement. On the contrary. I can see all of the benefits.

Senator **Kerry**. Mr. Ambassador, I think, again, we are missing the——

Ambassador **Habib**. The answer is the Contras, under an agreement there would not be any Contras per se. There would be Nicaraguans dealing with the internal Nicaraguan situation according to the terms of the agreement. That is the beauty of a comprehensive agreement.

Senator **Kerry**. I totally agree with what you are saying. We are not disagreeing.

Ambassador **Habib**. I know we don't disagree.

Senator **Kerry**. The question is can you get to that agreement without asserting—you started to assert it in the letter, but then the administration walked back on it.

Ambassador **Habib**. No, the administration did not walk back on the letter. They took the ambiguity out of it, out of their own statements.

Look, I was castigated for the letter without reason.

Senator **Kerry**. Let me ask you this question, and it will be the last one, and I will then cede to my colleague.

Why are you not willing to say, no one has ever heard you say, the Sandinistas have said they were willing to sign the 1984 September draft.

Ambassador **Habib**. One of the drafts.

Senator **Kerry**. Now I have read that draft in its totality, and it said they would agree to have no Soviet bases, they would agree to have no Cuban military advisors—there may be some argument about what was meant by advisors, but they said that. They said they would limit maneuvers to within 30 kilometers of the border with 30 days' notice, or some days' notice. They said they would limit the size of the military, et cetera, et cetera. No more importation of weapons—many things that we could have verified very easily with national technical means, and other things that we could verify in other ways, I think.

That is what they said they would do.

We have never said, in that context we never said and today we are not saying it, if they will agree to sign it, we will have an arrangement by which prior to, or maybe simultaneous, aid to the Contras will be cut off. We have always said "No, we want to see if you adhere to the standards of behavior first. We want to see if verification works first."

The Contras still remain out there as an entity that they have to deal with.

Now, why can't we say that we will simultaneously withhold aid from the Contras and not aid the Contras if you do this?

Ambassador **Habib**. The answer comes to the question of timing.

There would obviously, presumably, be if you had such an agreement, there would be a cease-fire. At least there would be an end to hostilities. Obviously that would be part of such an agreement.

Second, if there were such an agreement, it would also provide for certain guarantees for the people who were involved in hostilities, including the Contras. The Contras would no longer exist as Contras, as a fighting force opposing the government.

Senator **Kerry**. That's correct.

Ambassador **Habib**. They would become part of Nicaragua.

Now, what happens to the Contras in that regard? After all, implementation is going to be over a period of time.

Now, you couldn't expect the Contras to disband totally.

Senator **Kerry**. Well, they did during the 2 years we did not give them aid.

Ambassador **Habib**. No. You would presume they would continue to survive.

Now, would they require aid? That would be a judgment you would have to make at the time. They may require some aid. You can't take a force and just disband it. You know, it's not going to be General Lee telling his men take a horse and a plow and go home. It's not going to be that way.

The value of the negotiated approach is that it ought to be able to deal with the question of hostilities in a context which produces the kind of political-military-security relations in the area that give some hope of continued stability.

There is no question but that the Sandinistas will agree on force levels. It is a question of what force levels.

After all, they have their own formula, which is not an adequate one. It has to be accepted by the others. And the formula that the other guys accept sometimes is not acceptable to the Sandinistas.

That is what all the argument is about.

What I have been trying to do is to make sure, as I go around, that they continue to deal with those issues and deal with them in a negotiating context, and indicating that the United States will abide by and support an agreement that is achieved in this manner.

Now, why you say that we have never indicated what we would do—we would abide by the agreement. That agreement will require certain things of everybody, including all the Central Americans, and anybody else who is involved in the region.

The **Chairman**. I must interrupt you here.

Ambassador **Habib**. For example, we wouldn't be able to conduct maneuvers in certain areas.

Senator **Kerry**. I want to thank the Chair.

The **Chairman**. I have just been informed that an objection will be raised against our meeting at this time, so we should be winding up and desisting.

Senator **Kerry**. I thank the Chair very much for his courtesy.

The **Chairman**. Prior to desisting, I just want to read into the record a paragraph.

Senator Biden earlier cited an estimate that 50,000 Nicaraguans died in the revolution against Somoza. After Senator Biden left, Secretary Abrams said that he thought the estimate of 50,000 in the fight against Somoza was too high.

For the record, I would like to put in these three citations on behalf of Senator Biden.

One, John Bruce, in his book, says between 40,000 and 50,000; second, Shirley Christian, in her book, "Nicaragua: Revolution and the Family," on page 117, citing a 10-month period with 10,000 lives being lost; and from the "Area Studies Handbook Series" there was an estimate of 30,000 to 50,000.

Those are in the record. I do not mean to engage in a dialog on that.

I would like to point out that there is one huge difference between Nicaragua and Afghanistan. In Nicaragua, there was the semblance of an election, and we are trying to throw out a government that resulted from that rather inadequate election, but, still, they went through with it. In Afghanistan, we are trying to throw out people who have invaded that country, the Russians.

I also understand that, for the record, you will submit the names of those nations that helped us on a confidential basis.

Mr. **ABRAMS**. Well, no. What I will do is ask Judge Sofaer how to respond to that request. I don't know what they are, but I will try.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Thank you.

Senator **DODD**. And how much money.

Mr. **ABRAMS**. Again, if he knows and he is able to respond.

Senator **DODD**. Well, if he doesn't, then let's find out who does. The Secretary knows. I mean, somebody knows. Let's not take it so narrowly, Elliott. We would like to know. Confidentially, we want to be informed.

The **CHAIRMAN**. I think the committee really should know, and I apologize for the abrupt closure of this meeting.

Senator **DODD**. Mr. Chairman, before we go——

The **CHAIRMAN**. Senator Dodd.

Senator **DODD** [continuing]. The continuing resolution talks about $5 million of funds appropriated for the Contras would be available to the BOS, Alfredo Cesar's group. Have we provided any assistance to them, or is that contingent on them supporting UNO?

Mr. **ABRAMS**. No. We have provided assistance to them.

As a matter of fact, they and UNO on January 9 had a kind of political agreement. We provided assistance to them.

Senator **DODD**. How much of that $5 million?

Mr. **ABRAMS**. Pardon?

Senator **DODD**. How much of that $5 million?

Mr. **ABRAMS**. I don't have a number figure in my head.

Senator **DODD**. Would you get that number for us, too?

Mr. **ABRAMS**. Sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

U.S. ASSISTANCE TO THE SOUTHERN OPPOSITION BLOC

Information concerning U.S. assistance to the Southern Opposition Bloc [BOS] has been provided to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Senator **DODD**. Last, aircraft to Honduras, F-5E's. When I was there, they were talking about it.

Has the administration made up its mind on what it is going to do? If they want the F-5E's, how are they going to get them?

Mr. **Abrams**. They will probably get them if you let it happen.

Senator **Dodd**. You are going to go ahead with that?

Mr. **Abrams**. I would say that the final decision isn't made, but that certainly is the direction we are moving in. It is a fair assumption that that is the direction we are going to come out.

So, it would come up to you soon, I think, in the normal course, under the statute.

Senator **Dodd**. Well, I know what we have to do up here. But the administration has made the decision, then, to go ahead with that sale?

Mr. **Abrams**. I don't know that we have actually made it formally. But it is certainly the direction we are moving in. Yes.

Senator **Dodd**. Last, on that point, I would like to get a comparison between the MIG-21 and the F-5E.

Mr. **Abrams**. Sure.

[The information referred to follows:]

Characteristics of the F-5E and MIG-21

Either the F-5E or the MIG-21 could appear to be superior depending on what specific characteristics were examined. If looked at in terms of speed alone, the MIG-21 is superior, with Mach 2.1 capability as opposed to the F-5E's Mach 1.6. With respect to armament, the two have similar weapons-carrying capabilities which can be varied depending on the mission configuration. A typical weapons load for the MIG-21 would consist of 4 air-to-air missiles, 1 23mm cannon and mixed ordnance up to 2000kg while a normal F-5E configuration would carry 2 air-to-air missiles, 2 20mm cannons and mixed ordnance up to 3175kg. The MIG-21 shows clear superiority in combat radius with the ability to fly 165-760nm depending on mission profile, compared to the 160-460nm capability of the F-5E. The F-5E, however, has a tighter turn radius of 3,900 feet compared to the MIG's 4,400 feet. The F-5E can turn faster, taking 13 seconds to complete a 180 degree turn with a rate of turn of 13.8 degrees per second. This compares to the MIG-21's ability to complete a 180 degree turn in 15.5 seconds with a rate of turn of 11.6 degrees per second.

Based on these factors, the F-5E appears to have the edge in an air defense role. The MIG-21, on the other hand, has an advantage as an air-to-ground fighter aircraft by virtue of its range and speed.

The **Chairman**. I am very glad the power to end this hearing was not invoked earlier.

Thank you very much.

Thank you for your patience, Secretary Abrams and Ambassador Habib.

Ambassador **Habib**. Thank you for your courtesy, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. **Abrams**. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 1:59 p.m., the hearing was concluded.]

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SECURITY THROUGH DIPLOMACY: A POLICY OF PRINCIPLED REALISM

Kenneth E. Sharpe,
Douglas C. Bennett,
Morris J. Blachman,
and William M. LeoGrande

The United States needs a new foreign policy for Central America, one deeply rooted in an accurate assessment of contemporary realities in the region, one that embodies our nation's founding principles and responds to our genuine interests in the region. We must give up past policies guided by a hegemonic strategic vision that has become increasingly costly and counterproductive. What we need is a policy of principled realism, one that pursues not only our security, but peace, democracy, and broadly shared development as well.

A policy of principled realism, based on a nonhegemonic vision, would be guided by the following:

1. The foremost long-term objective of U.S. policy must be to promote broadly shared development and encourage democracy. While not ignoring the East-West dimension of regional conflict, such a policy would recognize that this aspect is secondary. The primary and long-term sources of turmoil in Central America are inequality and authoritarianism.
2. Diplomatic solutions should be a primary objective of U.S. policy. The peaceful settlement of disputes through diplomacy, especially in an area where U.S. political and economic influence is great, minimizes the risk that regional issues will be caught up in the East-West conflict. The escalation and internationalization of regional conflict presents the greatest danger of superpower involvement and confrontation.
3. We should refrain from undertaking any policy that is unable to garner allied support, except in the most extraordinary circumstances where

there is a direct and immediate danger to U.S. security. Our ability to achieve our interests is enhanced if we work together with our allies in the region, rather than acting unilaterally.

4. The United States should work diplomatically, in concert with our allies, to change the behavior of any regime which is a gross and systematic violator of human rights or which enforces deep social inequality by repressive means. The United States should not render assistance, military or economic (except humanitarian or disaster relief), to such a regime. Any regime, leftist or rightist, which engages in these practices plants the seeds of its own destruction. The interests of the United States are not served by befriending authoritarian regimes in Central America, even though they may align themselves with the West against the Soviet Union.
5. The United States should apply the same policy principles to all countries. The key test to determine the response of the United States is how regimes behave in practice, regardless of their location on an ideological spectrum. The interests of the United States are not automatically endangered by revolutionary regimes.

Following these guidelines would better safeguard our national interests than current efforts to maintain hegemony in Central America. But the habit of control, once acquired, is difficult to break. Policy changes similar to these have been suggested in the past, and have invariably been attacked as unworkable. Some opponents of a new approach are honestly unwilling to accept the passing of U.S. dominance in Central America and are prepared to pay the increasingly heavy costs of maintaining it. Others, however, are so accustomed to taking U.S. hegemony for granted that they misconstrue any policy that begins from a different premise as synonymous with neo-isolationist withdrawal.

The policy of principled realism is not a retreat to neo-isolationism. Neo-isolationism is not a feasible alternative for the United States—our economic and political influence in the region is too great. Our weight will be felt whether it is consciously exercised or not. The alternative to hegemony and interventionism is not isolationism but rather a more intelligent involvement. We do not have to control internal events in the region in order to protect our security. Indeed, it is exactly this understanding that frees us to become more intelligently involved in encouraging peace, broadly shared development, and democracy. How, then, are military force, aid, and diplomacy best employed to achieve the objectives of a policy of principled realism? How are problems of external aggression and armed insurgency to be dealt with?

The use of military force is often taken to be the most effective means of securing a desired outcome in the international arena, and the frustrations of diplomacy can easily tempt powerful nations like the United States to simply impose a solution on weaker adversaries. But the effectiveness of military force as an instrument of foreign policy can be easily over-estimated, as the United States discovered in Vietnam and the Soviet Union is discovering in Afghanistan.

A policy of principled realism views force as a legitimate but last resort, to be used only in instances where there is a clear and present danger to the security of the United States, or to hemispheric peace as determined by the OAS in accord with the prescriptions of the Rio treaty. The principal instruments for advancing U.S. interests would be multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, and bilateral assistance programs.

Assistance programs should be used to create a structure of incentives for potential recipients to behave in ways consistent with U.S. interests. Except for humanitarian assistance (which should be distributed strictly on the basis of need), economic aid should be withheld from regimes determined to maintain deep social inequality or that are gross and consistent violators of internationally recognized human rights. With such regimes, the United States must guard against the temptation to reward minimum changes that are no more than cosmetic efforts to influence U.S. aid policy.

When governments do show a determination to address the problems of poverty and inequality with policies that promote broadly shared development, the United States should be generous with its assistance. Governments that pursue land reform, literacy, rural health care, and employment opportunities for all deserve to be seriously considered for economic aid. On the other hand, governments that pursue none of these but try to curry favor merely by aligning themselves with the United States against the Soviet Union, do not deserve our assistance.

Military assistance programs to Central America should be strictly limited to governments that enjoy some popular basis of legitimacy so that U.S. aid will not be used for the repression of popular dissent—a more restrictive criterion than the simple absence of gross and consistent human rights violations. There are only two legitimate needs for military equipment that the United States should be prepared to meet: the need for adequate forces to defend a nation against external aggression, and the need to defend democratic institutions against internal violence by a small, well-armed minority.

The provision of military assistance must be part of a broader policy of supporting multilateral agreements limiting the regional arms race, and providing mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. In this way, the need for large military establishments in the region can be greatly circumscribed. If, despite these efforts, a government acts in violation of international peace, the policy of the United States should be to set in motion the multilateral security arrangements defined in the OAS Charter, the Rio treaty and the UN Charter. Needless to say, the United States should refrain from providing military or economic assistance to a government engaged in such a violation of the peace, but more active sanctions —except in extraordinary cases—should await multilateral action.

Armed insurgency against an existing government poses a different sort of threat to peace. In Central America, insurgency is most typically a product of social inequality and political repression practiced by right-wing authoritarian regimes. In such circumstances, the United States should seek to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict. The United States should refrain from allying itself with an existing authoritarian regime merely because of the radicalism of its opponents.

The emphasis a policy of principled realism places on diplomacy to seek peaceful, negotiated settlements of international and internal conflicts better safeguards our national interests than current efforts to maintain hegemony in Central America. But the benefits of diplomacy are often overlooked by those policymakers who erroneously assume that security and diplomacy are somehow antithetical. Diplomacy, they argue, is unrealistic and unreliable. International agreements are hard to achieve and impossible to enforce. The international arena is a jungle in which no agreement is an adequate substitute for the ability to use force. Being "realistic" is taken as synonymous with "being tough," which in turn is taken to mean using force. Indeed, for some, force is no longer simply one means to protect security, it is the only means. Such a narrow view of security is dangerous, for it blinds policymakers to the ways in which diplomacy may be far more effective in serving our national interests—including our security interests.

Though arduous, diplomacy has the great advantage of solving international problems with relatively small expenditures of resources. Its primary instrument is negotiation, and when successful, its results are less costly and more enduring than the use of force because all parties have an interest in abiding by the outcome. When compliance is coerced, the coercion must be constant to maintain the status quo.

To seek security through diplomacy does not mean that tomorrow you begin to "trust" your enemies: that kind of idealism is as naïve and dangerous as a reflexive reliance on force. Trust is something that must be created by small, incremental steps, each of which tests the sincerity of the opponents, each of which is verifiable and enforceable, and each of which convinces opponents that the next step is worth taking. Good diplomacy structures agreements which are grounded in the self-interest of each party, so that each side has good reason to keep their part of the bargain if the other does. Creating such trust does not necessarily mean that each party likes the other's government or goals; it simply means gaining confidence that each can rely on the other to do what they say.

To seek security through diplomacy does not mean rejecting the use of force: it means making intelligent choices about when and where to use it. Force, or the threat of it, may be useful in certain circumstances to back diplomacy, but the preceding chapters have shown that U.S. policy has too often been one of gunboats without diplomacy. The confusion of force with security is tied up with the confusion of hegemony and national interest. Force is necessary if the United States is to control the internal character of regimes in Central America; but such control is not necessary to protect U.S. interests. Indeed, the case studies in this book have shown that the use of force directly, or indirectly through proxies, has usually been counterproductive.

Diplomacy can be an especially effective instrument for the United States in Central America because we have great influence in the region, economically and politically. This influence provides U.S. diplomats with enormous leverage that no other nation or combination of nations can rival. We saw in Chapter 11 how the Reagan administration used that influence to weaken the Contadora process and thus block a regional diplomatic solution to the Central American crisis. It could just as easily have been used to promote one.

Those who are skeptical of the efficacy of diplomacy are ordinarily equally leery of multilateral approaches to international problems since these require diplomacy of a high order. Multilateralism triggers images of weakness, of the United States allowing others to determine or constrain its course of action. In part, the Reagan administration's hostility to the Contadora process reflected such an attitude.

There is no doubt that multilateral action requires a willingness to compromise on the part of individual participants, since each will have different interests and a different notion of how the problem should be addressed. The United States cannot pursue a multilateral approach to the Central American conflict while at the same time being unwilling to restrain its behavior so that it accords with the interests of other participants. The refusal of the Reagan administration to act with such restraint is precisely why its rhetorical assertions of support for Contadora ring hollow in the face of its record of behavior.

The unwillingness of the Reagan administration to cooperate with the Contadora nations is not proof of U.S. strength but of its isolation. That isolation is not the product of any profound difference of national interest between us and the Contadora nations. On the contrary, they are among our best friends in Latin America. They share our basic interests in avoiding the spread of the conflict, preventing an increased Cuban or Soviet presence, and promoting democracy and economic development. They do not, however, share the idea that the United States must maintain its hegemony over the region. If the imperative of control were to be dropped, it would open wide vistas for diplomatic cooperation, allowing us to supplement our own considerable influence with the enormous resources our allies could bring to bear.

Abandoning the imperative of control would also strengthen the moral authority of our leadership in the region. The influence enjoyed by the United States in the international arena is not solely a function of our wealth and military might. To a considerable degree it is rooted in the values upon which the United States was founded: democracy, self-determination and social equality. When we allow the pursuit of short-term advantage to divert our foreign policy from these principles—as we have too often done in Central America—we undermine our claim to moral leadership. Moreover, a democratic society cannot long sustain a foreign policy that contravenes its most basic precepts. Eventually either the policy or the precepts must give way.

The basic precepts of a policy of principled realism laid out above should not be taken as precise policy prescriptions. Rather, they are the general rules that serve to fashion specific policy prescriptions that respond to concrete and difficult historical realities. Political realities are complex and changing; at times, trade-offs must be made between various policy objectives, trade-offs that are impossible to predict and script ahead of time. No set of policy principles is a substitute for practical reason. Perhaps the best way to understand how a policy of principled realism might work in practice is to apply it to the situation in Central America in 1986.

NICARAGUA

In Nicaragua, the United States confronts a radical revolutionary government that came to power by deposing a right-wing dictatorship that was for decades a close ally of Washington—unfortunately a familiar dilemma in U.S. foreign policy. The United States has a long and unappealing history of backing such dictatorships in Central America and elsewhere in the Third World because they were friendly and maintained stability. In exchange, Washington was willing to overlook the gross social inequality and political repression that often characterized the internal politics of such allies. But with predictable regularity, regimes such as Batista's in Cuba, Somoza's in Nicaragua, and the shah's in Iran have proven incapable of sustaining themselves in the face of the polarization of politics brought about by their own policies.

When regimes such as these succumb to revolution, they are succeeded by governments predisposed to distrust the United States, or even to see it as an enemy because of its support for the old order. In these circumstances, revolutionary governments almost always have some ideological affinity for socialism, which may, in its more radical variants, have little place for pluralist democracy. Such revolutionary governments will look, almost reflexively, to upgrade their relations with the Soviet bloc as a way of diversifying their dependency on the West in general, and the United States in particular. They may also see in the Soviet Union and its allies a source of military aid to defend the revolution against the anticipated hostility of the United States—an anticipation born of historical experience in Latin America.

It is difficult to imagine a less opportune set of circumstances for developing a positive relationship between the United States and a revolutionary government. That our traditional policies toward the Third World so often present us with this nearly intractable dilemma is in itself a major indictment of them. A central objective of the policy of partnership and realism advocated here is to avoid arriving at situations such as these, where the best one can hope for is to minimize the damage to U.S. interests.

But the legacy of the past cannot be wished away. Any policy that asserts the need to establish a new basis for relations between the United States and our closest neighbors must be able to handle the difficult case of a revolution in power—like the revolution in Nicaragua.

The U.S. relationship with Nicaragua could be quite different today if we had taken a different approach to the Somoza regime a decade or two ago, ending our uncritical support for the dictatorship. Our failure to do so narrowed the choices available to policymakers in the Carter administration when Nicaragua exploded in revolution in 1978. Despite the legacy of past policy, the Carter administration tried to formulate a constructive relationship with the new revolutionary government. Despite mistrust and difficulties, Carter's policy achieved some limited success because it was premised on the interest both nations had in avoiding mutual animosity. But Carter's policy came unraveled after Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential victory, and the new administration replaced it with a policy of thoroughgoing hostility whose highest priority was to overthrow the Sandinistas—a policy that seemed to have scant chance of success and has proved increasingly counterproductive.

What would a policy of principled realism prescribe? Most importantly, it would have a very different set of objectives from those pursued by the Reagan administration. The top priority would be to assure that Nicaragua did not become a strategic asset for the Soviet Union, thereby introducing the East-West conflict into the region in a way that directly endangered the security of the United States.

It is important to recognize at the outset that Nicaragua has shown no interest in becoming a forward base for Soviet strategic weapons, nor has the Soviet Union shown any interest in emplacing such weapons there. This problem is a potential, rather than a clear and present, danger. This danger is first and foremost a problem in relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The United States should clearly and unequivocally advise the Soviets that it will not tolerate the stationing of strategic weapons in Nicaragua, any more than it was willing to tolerate their placement in Cuba in 1962. Nicaragua should be informed of this position as well. If such weapons were to be introduced, the United States, in consultation with its allies in Latin America and Europe, should take whatever steps are required to achieve their removal.

Regional (as distinct from global) security concerns should be a priority of U.S. policy as well. The United States, along with all the nations of the hemisphere, have an interest in preventing armed aggression, direct or indirect, by one nation against another. All nations in the hemisphere are bound by the OAS Charter and the Rio treaty to abstain from such behavior, including the provision of material assistance to insurgent movements fighting against a neighboring government. That these commitments are often bent and broken does not diminish their importance for the preservation of regional peace.

If, as the Reagan administration has so often claimed, the United States has evidence of Nicaraguan arms shipments to the guerrillas in El Salvador, it should take that evidence to the OAS as required by the Rio treaty and seek multilateral sanctions against Nicaragua in order to halt that aid. A unilateral military response, such as the Reagan administration has pursued, is itself a violation of international law, leaving the United States vulnerable to condemnation before such international forums as the World Court.

A multilateral response is more effective because it strengthens U.S. relations with its allies around the hemisphere, whereas a unilateral response weakens them. And a lawful response that has the support of key U.S. allies is also more likely to command broad bipartisan support at home, making it more sustainable. The first step toward such a policy would be to halt the covert war against Nicaragua. The second step would be to give full and unequivocal support to the efforts of the Contadora nations to address the full range of regional security issues in a multilateral diplomatic context. A successful Contadora accord would address not only the issue of support for cross-border subversion but also the issues of the regional military arms race and the foreign military presence. If Nicaragua, or any state, were to violate a signed Contadora agreement, there would then be a clear basis for multilateral sanctions.

The United States has an interest in promoting democracy and equitable economic development in Nicaragua—interests that should have a higher priority than they have traditionally had in U.S. policy. For decades these interests were subordinated to the desire to maintain Somoza's friendship. But the reality of postrevolutionary Nicaragua is that the United States can no longer impose its will. Even the most skillful policy can do no more than create conditions that tend to favor democracy and development. But current policy is producing a more authoritarian Nicaragua and a poorer one.

Events of the past five years have shown that as the Sandinistas face increasing military pressure, they grow less tolerant of internal opposition, which tends to be identified, rightly or wrongly, with the armed contras. Ending U.S. military pressure provides no guarantee that the Sandinistas would allow pluralism to flourish. But a continuation of it is almost certain to produce deepening authoritarianism. A policy of principled realism would lift U.S. military pressure, seeking instead to improve the prospects for Nicaraguan democracy by providing economic incentives for the observance of democratic rights and values.

An overall policy of principled realism would look to diplomatic means of resolving our conflicts with Nicaragua and multilateral support for our actions. Relations between Nicaragua and the United States have deteriorated so seriously over the past few years that bilateral negotiations are probably an essential adjunct to the regional negotiations occurring under the auspices of Contadora. The United States should not only reopen the bilateral talks with Nicaragua that Washington ended in December 1984, but actively work to redefine bilateral relations along the lines sketched above.

The fundamental difference between these prescriptions and the direction of current policy should be obvious. A policy of principled realism does not begin with the premise that the United States must maintain control over the nature of regimes in Central America in order to protect our interests, so it does not conclude that the United States must reestablish the control that has been lost in Nicaragua. Current U.S. policy seeks the overthrow of the Sandinista government as a way of reasserting that control. A policy of principled realism would not.

Current policy assumes that the radical leftist character of the Sandinista regime makes it incompatible with U.S. interests in the region. A policy of principled realism begins with the premise that revolutionary governments of the left are no more an inherent threat to U.S. interests than reactionary governments of the right. Whether a regime is willing to live in peace with its neighbors is something to be demonstrated in practice—it cannot be assumed. And how amenable to democratic political and social reform an authoritarian government is cannot be simplistically deduced from which end of the ideological spectrum it lies on.

The United States should always use its political, economic, and diplomatic influence to encourage democracy and economic development, and U.S. aid and friendship should depend upon the responsiveness of other nations to our interest in promoting these values. But it should not be the policy of the United States to seek the violent overthrow of governments, on the right or on the left, that organize their politics and their societies differently from ours.

We saw in Chapters 4 and 11 that over the course of the past few years, there have been several opportunities to move toward a diplomatic solution of the legitimate security concerns the United States has regarding Nicaragua. In early 1981, the Reagan administration simply ignored Nicaragua's demonstrated willingness to curtail material support for the Salvadoran guerrillas in exchange for normal relations with the United States. Later that year, Washington severed bilateral talks focused on the same issue. In 1982, the administration agreed only reluctantly to reopen a dialogue with Nicaragua based upon the initiative of Mexican President López-Portillo and halted that dialogue before the year was out. Similarly fruitless negotiations were held in the latter half of 1984, again at the urging of Mexico.

Since 1982, the Nicaraguans have clearly and repeatedly indicated their willingness to reach agreement on the full range of regional security issues raised under the auspices of Contadora. The United States has insisted that this is not enough, that the Sandinistas must be willing to negotiate the internal character of the Nicaraguan government. In 1985, the administration added the demand that the Sandinistas open a dialogue with the contras as a necessary condition for the United States to cease its military pressure on the regime.

The Reagan administration's obsessive focus on the nature of the Nicaraguan government illustrates with particular clarity how the imperative of control actually weakens the ability of the United States to secure its basic interests. The United States does have legitimate security interests in Central America, foremost among them the maintenance of international peace and the restriction of any Soviet military presence sufficient to threaten the United States or its allies. The multilateral efforts of the Contadora nations and the bilateral proposals made by Nicaragua all suggest that the Sandinistas are prepared to make concessions on their foreign policy behavior that would meet U.S. security concerns. But such agreements would leave the Sandinista regime intact, and therefore would require that Washington accepts its loss of control in Nicaragua. Rather than abandon the hegemonic presumption, the United States is instead passing up the opportunity to achieve its basic security interests diplomatically.

The alternative is not difficult to conceive. The United States should relax its military and economic pressures against the Nicaraguan government, reopen bilateral negotiations, and give sincere support to the Contadora process in order to achieve verifiable agreements on the basic issues of strategic and regional security. Then, working in tandem with our allies, we should establish a system of incentives to encourage democracy and reconciliation in Nicaragua.

EL SALVADOR

When the United States confronts a revolution in progress against a friendly regime, as in El Salvador, there is rarely any equivocation—almost always the United States comes to the aid of the threatened regime, regardless of its character. In those rare instances when Washington withholds support from such a regime, it is usually because policymakers have judged that it cannot survive. Under such circumstances, U.S. support may be curtailed as a way of easing out the existing government so it can be replaced with a government more capable of defeating the revolutionary threat. This was precisely the design of U.S. policy toward Somoza's government in Nicaragua in early 1979, and toward Romero's government in El Salvador in the fall of that year.

But it is hard to find a single contemporary example of a Latin American revolution (as distinct from a military coup in which one faction of the existing elite replaces another) where Washington remained neutral. Such reliably consistent behavior patterns are rare in international affairs. The explanation, as discussed in earlier chapters, is the imperative of keeping leftist political forces from power. In the late twentieth century, most revolutionary movements have a strong leftist, or Marxist, component.

Washington's opposition to revolutions, then, is based upon the a priori assumption that revolutionary victories mean the advent of the radical left to power, that the radical left in power will challenge the traditional control exercised by the United States, and that this loss of control will open the region to increased Soviet influence, if not military presence. Just below the surface is the additional worry that successful revolutions tend to inspire revolutionaries elsewhere, thereby multiplying the basic problem. This is the logic by which the United States has become an antirevolutionary power.

On some occasions, Washington's support for existing regimes is tempered by a desire to promote reform—to change the unstable status quo gradually as a way of warding off revolution. These reformist interludes do not have an impressive record of success, largely because they spring less from principle than from instrumentalism. The interest of the United States in reform tends to diminish proportionally as the revolutionary threat subsides. In truth, the animus for reform has never approached the strength and permanence of the imperative for order.

There is no objective basis in the national interest for the United States to act as a bastion of counterrevolution. The imperative of maintaining control that has led us to this stance is a false interest, as this book has tried to demonstrate. When revolution erupts in a neighboring country, there is no a priori reason for the United States to support either side. The proper policy depends entirely upon the character of the existing regime and its opposition.

But before elaborating this argument, it is important to distinguish between authentic revolutionary movements and terrorist groups. Although some cases may fall in a "gray area" that makes them difficult to define, it is possible to distinguish between a broadly based revolutionary movement, in which people challenge an authoritarian regime that does not serve their interests, and an armed minority that seeks to use violence to destabilize a regime that has broad legitimacy and is responsive to popular demands.

This is a crucial distinction. In the case of a legitimate government under attack, the United States should be prepared to provide security assistance sufficient to allow it to defend itself. But when an authentic revolution erupts against an authoritarian regime, the United States has no compelling interest in defending that regime against its own people, or preventing a revolutionary victory—even if the likely outcome of such a victory is an authoritarian regime of the left. In short, between authoritarianism of the right and left, the United States should be indifferent—willing to conduct normal but not close or friendly relations—and prepared to use its influence to bring about democratic reforms.

It is hard to imagine the United States investing its power and resources to support a left-wing authoritarian regime. It should be equally hard to imagine the United States supporting right-wing authoritarian regimes.

The neutrality in the face of revolution advocated above does not imply noninvolvement. On the contrary, the influence that the United States has in Central America gives it the opportunity to play a uniquely valuable role as mediator, promoting peaceful negotiated solutions to internal armed conflicts. Such solutions hold the best hope of avoiding both variants of authoritarianism and therefore better serve U.S. interests than the traditional role of nemesis to revolutions.

The conflict in El Salvador, we saw in Chapter 3, fits this basic pattern. The revolutionary movement began as a result of legitimate grievances against a repressive military dictatorship, and it secured a significant base of popular support for itself. The reforms the United States has been able to initiate in El Salvador since 1980 have not been unimportant, but they have not fundamentally altered the basic dynamics of the politics that set the revolution in motion.

A policy of principled realism would seek a negotiated settlement of the Salvadoran conflict, rather than seeking military victory for the existing regime. Indeed, several opportunities for a positive resolution of the crisis have been missed over the past six years, opportunities that the United States might have taken advantage of had it not been so determined to prevent the opposition from achieving any share of political power. The resulting years of war have, of course, been costly for El Salvador, but even worse, they have left a legacy that makes the situation more intractable as time goes on.

The first opportunity came after young officers led a coup in October 1979, and set up a civilian-military junta. The announced plans for an end to violence and corruption, free elections, and land reform opened the possibility for a government of national reconciliation. Reform-minded officers seemed to be on the ascendant within the military; the insurgents were few in number, and many of the peasants, workers, students, and professionals organized in radical popular associations were to some degree willing to give the new junta a chance. The civilians on the junta and in the cabinet were respected leaders, including Social Democrats and Christian Democrats. The rightist oligarchy and the reactionary officers within the military were at their weakest.

At this moment, the United States could, and should, have stated clearly and forcefully that it supported the new government and the goal of national reconciliation, that it would actively oppose efforts of the far right to block reform and reconciliation, and that if a government committed to national reconciliation were ousted by a rightist coup, all U.S. military and economic assistance would be terminated.

Instead, because it feared the new government might seek to incorporate the radical left rather than defeat it, the United States stood by as the far right forced the collapse of the October junta. The rightist government that followed maintained the façade of civilian rule, but its main priority was winning the war against the guerrillas.

A second opportunity was lost in the spring of 1981, shortly after Reagan came to office. Sobered by the failure of their January military offensive, and facing reduced aid from Cuba and Nicaragua, the FDR-FMLN signaled its interest in a negotiated settlement. In March and April, Archbishop Rivera y Damas offered to mediate and got agreement from the FDR-FMLN, the Christian Democratic International, the Socialist International, the pope, and, more tentatively, from junta leader José Napoleon Duarte.

Once again, had the United States thrown its support behind this initiative, making clear that continued military assistance was contingent upon the willingness of the Salvadoran military to accept a negotiated solution to the war, a solution might have been achieved. Instead, when the archbishop went to Washington in April to seek U.S. support, Vice-President Bush and the State Department said they were not interested. Without U.S. support, Duarte was powerless to bring the Salvadoran military to the bargaining table.

The third opportunity came in the wake of Duarte's election as president in 1984 and the victory of his Christian Democrats in the legislative elections in 1985. Duarte ran for election on the promise that he would seek a negotiated end to the war, and in October 1984, he initiated unconditional negotiations, as the FDR-FMLN had been calling for since late 1981. Duarte's proposal came at a propitious time. Exhausted by four years of civil war, the public supported the move overwhelmingly. Pragmatic officers in the high command were willing to accept negotiations because the war seemed stalemated. Furthermore, few officers dared openly oppose Duarte because they understood that it was only his presence that convinced the U.S. Congress to back high levels of military aid. The FDR-FMLN, long ready to negotiate, was also weary of the war and anxious to find a political solution.

For the negotiations to move beyond the initial exuberance of the La Palma meeting, however, the Salvadoran military had to accept them. Had the United States vigorously supported the negotiating process, it would have strengthened the pragmatists within the armed forces and given Duarte a much freer hand in the dialogue. Instead, the Reagan administration paid lip service to the idea of dialogue, while denouncing any compromise that would allow the opposition to share power. Washington would accept nothing more than an agreement to allow the rebels to participate in the next round of elections in return for amnesty—in effect only the terms of the FDR-FMLN's surrender were negotiable. The dialogue died forthwith.

In 1986, and for the foreseeable future, the key to finding a negotiated political solution to the war in El Salvador is the willingness of the armed forces to accept such a solution, for it is the officer corps that still retains ultimate control over politics, setting the limits of civilian authority. Only the United States has the influence to bring the Salvadoran military to the bargaining table. Without U.S. support, a negotiated solution is impossible.

That is not to say that a shift in U.S. policy would necessarily suffice to persuade the military to negotiate. The Salvadoran army has a long history of resisting initiatives from the United States—on human rights, agrarian reform, and military tactics to name but a few instances—when Washington's proposals seemed to contravene the military's own interests. But there is evidence that when the United States exercises its full leverage over the Salvadoran army, as it did in late 1983 on the issue of the death squads, it gets results. Further, the risks of trying a new policy would be less than the nearly certain costs of the current alternatives: either increased U.S. military involvement or continued bloody stalemate.

If Washington sought to persuade the military to seek a negotiated solution to the war, it would have to demonstrate the seriousness of its commitment by making such a solution a condition of continued U.S. assistance. Strictly speaking, progress toward a negotiated settlement of the war *was* a condition of military aid in 1982 and 1983 (as written into the foreign aid act), but the Reagan administration simply ignored the law.

The first step in such a policy would be to cut aid from the current levels, which are aimed at achieving military victory. This would send a clear signal that the U.S. was firmly behind a negotiated solution rather than a military one.

The second step would be to clearly lay out conditions for continued aid: an acceptable human rights record free of gross and systematic violations; serious efforts toward a settlement of the conflict; and socioeconomic reforms that encouraged broadly shared development.

Thus far, the United States has not used its leverage to press for negotiations because serious negotiations would have to take into account the political and military power of the FDR-FMLN, and would almost certainly produce some form of institutional political role for the opposition in a transition government—i.e., "power-sharing." But keeping the left out of power has been the central objective of U.S. policy in El Salvador under both Carter and Reagan. It is that objective, rather than any actual U.S. interest, that has prevented Washington from taking advantage of various opportunities to pursue a negotiated end to the war, and which continues to do so, condemning both El Salvador and the United States to a war without end.

GUATEMALA ▲

Guatemala is the nation in Central America where the United States has historically been most involved in maintaining control by the use of military force against revolutionary movements. From the CIA-sponsored coup against Arbenz in 1954 to the counterinsurgency programs of the mid-1970s, no Central American nation received more military aid or advisers. Yet today, the United States has less influence in Guatemala than anywhere else in the region. This alone should serve as a stark indicator of how rapidly Central America has changed in recent decades, and how difficult it is becoming to sustain control of it.

As in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the Guatemalan regime has traditionally been controlled by economic and military elites that systematically blocked efforts at social or political reform, often physically eliminating opponents, moderate and radical alike, with barbarous efficiency. Until 1977, the United States supported and reinforced this regime rather than see it threatened by revolution.

The pivotal failure of U.S. policy in Guatemala came in 1954. The United States should have supported the reformism of Arbenz rather than overthrowing him to regain banana land for United Fruit. Subsequent aid to various Guatemalan military governments compounded this initial error by helping existing elites to resist any pressures for change. Certainly the United States could not have forced reforms on a recalcitrant Guatemalan regime, as President Carter discovered in 1977, but without U.S. support over the past three decades, the Guatemalan elite would not have been so secure, and perhaps might not have been so sure of its ability to repress all dissent.

In a case like Guatemala, where, until early 1986, an authoritarian regime of the right was secure enough that it did not depend on U.S. assistance for its immediate survival, how can Washington assert any effective leverage for change? Because U.S. leverage is limited in such cases, there is a temptation to provide aid to the existing regime in hopes of buying influence that can then be used to promote reform. More often than not, this is a trap that leads us into a relationship with an odious regime without producing any fundamental changes in it. Our interests are damaged to the same degree as when we support authoritarian regimes uncritically.

The policy of the United States toward such a regime should be to maintain proper but distant relations, deny military assistance, and, given the regime's gross violations of human rights, to actively discourage our allies from providing military assistance as well. Economic assistance should also be withheld, except for humanitarian assistance, which should be channeled through nongovernmental organizations.

The policy of the Carter administration toward Guatemala came close to this prescription. It was excoriated by some as unrealistic because it did not produce improvement in the Guatemalan regime's behavior. In fact, it was Carter's critics who lacked realism, for they judged the effectiveness of the sanctions solely by immediate impact. They did not ask whether decades of support for the Guatemalan regime had ever produced superior results. Nor did they look beyond the short term to ask what impact the sanctions might have on the long-term ability of the Guatemalan regime to sustain itself, or the effect they might have on U.S. relations with a future post-oligarchic Guatemalan government.

How a policy of principled realism would handle the situation of Guatemala in the aftermath of the 1985 elections depends on what the real significance of the election proves to be. The United States should make clear that in order to qualify for a resumption of U.S. assistance, Guatemala must embark on an authentic program of democratic reforms, not merely the façade of them.

Unfortunately, the elections are unlikely to alter the basic structure of power in which the military has the last word. It would be a mistake for the United States to rush to resume a close military relationship. Successive Guatemalan regimes have become skillful at trading minor concessions for aid while avoiding serious reform. We should publicly welcome any movement toward broader political participation and increased respect for civil liberties, and we should join with our regional allies to diplomatically encourage progress, but a resumption of assistance should await clear evidence that the character of the government has changed, and that it is willing at long last to make peace with its own people.

COSTA RICA, HONDURAS, PANAMA

With a constitutional democracy like Costa Rica, or even with struggling civilian governments like Honduras and Panama, U.S. foreign policy faces quite different problems than with revolutionary or right-wing regimes. The difficulties these more moderate regimes face principally are how to overcome existing impediments to reform, development, and the expansion of democracy, and how to maintain stability in the face of these transitions. An adequate U.S. foreign policy must understand the differences between these regimes and the others, and it must look for ways to respond to these countries' definitions of their own problems and needs.

The Panama Canal treaties provide a model for policies toward these regimes. Here the United States gave up the hegemonic presumption: through diplomacy we achieved more security for a strategic asset, we increased the legitimacy of a moderate regime, and we won respect for ourselves throughout Latin America.

In the 1980s, the United States must address itself to two basic policy problems in these nations. The first concerns how we respond to the severe economic problems confronting Panama, Costa Rica, and Honduras. The second concerns how to prevent these essentially stable countries from being caught up in the conflicts of their neighbors.

Economically, the United States needs to be sensitive to the enormous influence exerted by the U.S. economy (business cycles, interest rates, etc.), and by the public and private economic actors based in the United States (transnational corporations and banks, AID, the Export-Import Bank, etc.). Without quite realizing it, our behavior can deal powerful, destabilizing shocks to these economies. Regimes like Costa Rica, which have a commitment to broadly shared development, are exactly the ones whose requests for aid—loans, technical assistance—deserve the most serious consideration. Moreover our interest in helping such governments solve their own problems should make us more tolerant of economic practices unfamiliar to the United States such as state enterprises, vigorous regulation of foreign investment, or even demands for special tariff consideration from the United States.

Many of these regimes have faced acute economic troubles in recent years. High oil prices, high interest rates, declining exports because of world recession, and regional instability have brought on severe balance-of-payments problems. Costa Rica, for example, has been forced to impose austerity and has had difficulty tightening its belt in ways that do not breach a basic commitment to social justice, thereby threatening the legitimacy of its democratic institutions. The United States should not only be open to requests for aid but also encourage multilateral agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank to take the lead. Moreover, the United States should take its cues from the regime itself, respecting for example, Costa Rica's commitment to a state welfare system. While regimes seeking assistance must show themselves to be fiscally responsible to qualify for aid, this should not be construed narrowly to mean following orthodox monetary policy.

The second kind of policy problem that commonly arises in dealing with regimes like Costa Rica and Honduras involves the spillover of conflicts elsewhere in the region. Recent U.S. policies have wrongly defined the central problems of Costa Rica and Honduras as security problems—containing Nicaragua and preventing future insurgencies in these countries. The resulting U.S. policies, we saw in Chapters 5 and 6, actually exacerbated the situation.

In Honduras, the United States poured in huge amounts of military aid, sought protection for CIA-sponsored contras, and used the country as a staging ground for massive military maneuvers. The result was to exacerbate border tensions with Nicaragua, create serious local disruption in those areas of the country were the contras operated, worsen the climate for investments, limit freedom of dissent for domestic opposition groups, strengthen the hand of the military—in these and other ways encouraging conditions that could breed insurgency.

In Costa Rica, the Reagan administration pressured the government not only to allow the contras a base of operations but also to develop a military to cope with nonexistent internal subversion—a problem the administration believed was sure to arise on the faulty logic of the domino theory. As a result, Costa Rica's 1948 decision to do without a national military—a key to its stability and democracy—has been called into question and tensions have been raised that strain the fabric of its democracy. The problems today are much more difficult as a result of these policies. But a policy of principled realism could still help contain regional conflict rather than spread it. Such a policy would halt contra activity against Nicaragua, encourage Costa Rica to maintain only its small police force, and work with other regional actors to encourage Nicaragua, Honduras, and Costa Rica to create mechanisms, such as the ones suggested by the Contadora countries, for lessening conflicts along their borders. While such a policy would not completely insulate these borders, given the turmoil in the region, it would be far more likely than current policy to lessen border tensions, promote broadly shared development, and strengthen democratic institutions in these countries.

The United States cannot put a quick or easy end to Central America's social and political turmoil. No policy, regardless of the amount of money or force committed, can promise to produce stable, equitable democratic governments. The very changes that swept the region over the past few decades, shaking the oligarchic order to its foundations, have also made the region less amenable to control from Washington. As difficult as it may be for us to adjust to this new reality, it will not go away. We ignore it at our own peril, for efforts to recapture the halcyon days of U.S. hegemony have only deepened the instability, polarization, and violence that have come to dominate Central American politics.

The call to abandon this hegemonic presumption not only is value-based (a democratic society ought not have a foreign policy whose first premise is to keep its closest neighbors under limited sovereignty), but it is also based first and foremost upon a realistic assessment of the limits of the possible. We need to found our policy toward Central America on our real national interests rather than on the false interest of hegemony. We need to be less concerned with controlling how our neighbors organize their own politics and society and more concerned with how they actually behave toward us and the other nations of the region.

The traditional imperative of keeping the left out of power at all costs is proving increasingly difficult to achieve in a region grown as complex and politically active as Central America. Our efforts to enforce this ban have been counterproductive to the real national interests they were originally meant to serve because they have made it more difficult to stabilize the region's domestic conflicts and thereby raised the risk of regional war. Such efforts have also alienated us from our traditional allies in the area, who share our real interests in security, democracy, and development, but who strongly oppose our efforts to control events in a region that is as much their backyard as it is ours.

In short, the United States needs a policy for Central America that is designed to meet the limited security problems posed by the regional conflict, and does so as much as possible by diplomacy rather than the reflexive use of force; that shows a strict preference for democracy rather than for one variety of authoritarianism over another, but does not seek to impose that preference by force; and that works to encourage structural economic and social change that addresses the real roots of the region's political unrest. Whether we can craft such a policy and pursue it consistently in the future will determine how well we get along with our neighbors in a rapidly changing neighborhood.

LETTER FROM ALEXANDER M. HAIG, JR.

November 24, 1981

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the notification requirement set forth in Section 620(g) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (hereinafter, the "Act"), please be advised that I have determined, pursuant to delegations of authority issued thereunder, that it is in the national interest of the United States to furnish assistance under the Act in Fiscal Year 1982 to private sector organizations operating within the country of Nicaragua, notwithstanding that the Government of Nicaragua is more than six months in default in payment of principal and interest on loans made under the Act.

If the assistance in question were destined for the Government of Nicaragua, we would, of course, not waive the prohibition. However, all the recipients are private sector organizations, independent of the Nicaraguan Government. Their continued survival is crucial to the viability of pluralism and democracy in the country of Nicaragua. They merit our assistance.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Haig, Jr.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JESSE HELMS

Mr. Chairman, the obvious intent and purpose of the Weicker-Dodd proposal is to cut off assistance to the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters. So, in fact, we are talking about money already appropriated for the Nicaraguan Resistance. The fact that this is even being considered in and by the Senate has already sent a signal to our democratic allies in Central America that the United States is not concerned about their future.

Stripped of all pretense and obfuscation, when we I hear opponents of aid to the Freedom Fighters proclaim that the Central American nations do not favor the Reagan policy toward Nicaragua, I feel obliged to dissent. Two days ago I met with former President Monge of Costa Rica. He was in town and asked to meet with me about the situation in Nicaragua.

Before I had a chance to ask him any questions, he volunteered, with emphasis and concern, that the people of Costa Rica are gravely apprehensive that the U.S. Congress is not decisively in support of the anti-communist movement in Nicaragua. He related that without an Armed Forces, Costa Rica has no way to stop Sandinista aggression into its territory. He explained that Costa Rica now has more than 200,000 Nicaraguan refugees who fled to Costa Rica seeking freedom.

President Monge was very clear in stating that Costa Rica does consider the Sandinista regime to be a serious security threat. He asked me to convey this to the Committee this morning.

Mr. Chairman, essentially what we are talking about today is a total abandonment of the Freedom Fighters. Eight years ago, the Congress was responsible for rallying international support to enable the Sandinistas to come to power through force. Now that most of the world understands that it is a Marxist-Leninist government we find ourselves unable to insist that the Sandinistas live up to their original promises.

There are those who would insist that the United States continue to negotiate with a Communist government. We have been doing just that for seven and one half years. How much longer must we wait? Why do we expect that the Sandinistas will keep any new promises, when they have yet to fulfill the ones they made in 1979?

There are others that claim that the contras cannot win. How do we know that? They have never had a fighting chance. Of course they cannot win without our help. Last year the Soviet assistance to the Sandinista regime reached an all time high. The Soviet bloc countries provided almost 25,000 metric tons of military weapons and support equipment to Nicaragua. Most of this aid has been pouring in while the U.S, Congress has frittered away the weeks and months debating a token amount.

Mr. Chairman, we must decide whether or not the Sandinista regime presents a security threat to the region. If it does, we need to be taking the lead to support wholeheartedly the Nicaraguan Resistance -- or we must be prepared to send our own sons to war in the very near future.

Furthermore, I repeat what I said last week. If our goal is to achieve democracy in Nicaragua, how can we tolerate further recognition of an illegitimate government? How can we support anything less than President Reagan has requested in order for freedom to prevail once again?

I hope that we will not waste any more time discussing the merits of cutting off aid to the contras. We need to let the Freedom Fighters know that we are going to do everytning necessary to support their struggle for freedom. This Senator does not want the United States to take the blame in history for its failure to act to protect the freedom of our southern neighbors. We must act now to support the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters, and to remove the Sandinista regime from power.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PHILIP C. HABIB

I am pleased to have been invited to accompany Assistant Secretary Abrams to discuss with the distinguished members of this committee U.S. policy towards Nicaragua. Mr. Abrams has just given you a broad overview of our two-track policy, and I will now explain our views on negotiations in greater detail.

We believe that there should be a negotiating process for every conflict. In Central America it should be clear by now that negotiations that produce a democratic outcome in Nicaragua offer the best hope for peace in the region. The Contadora process has acknowledged this essential principle, and we have supported its negotiating efforts.

The Contadora process began in January 1983 when Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Venezuela formed the Contadora Group to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict in Central America. In September of that year, they and the five Central American countries produced the Document of Objectives. This document represents the essence of Contadora; it contains 21 points essential to a just and durable peace.

For over three years, the Contadora process has sought a formula for accomplishing these 21 objectives. Several draft agreements or actas have been tabled, and through lengthy negotiations much of the language has been accepted by all five of the Central American countries. However, several critical points remain unresolved. In 1985, with the process apparently deadlocked, four South American nations--Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay--formed the Support Group in an effort to revitalize the negotiations.

Contadora is an all-Latin process that now includes the largest Latin nations; these are important countries, and people listen when they speak. This is an encouraging development since it shows Latin American nations coming to grips with hemispheric problems.

Contadora seeks a comprehensive, regional approach to the problems in Central America. The 21 points of the Document of Objectives cover the full range of political, security, military, and economic issues which must be taken into account to resolve the conflict in Central America. They specifically include the need for national reconciliation and democratization, which are the keys to lasting peace.

The United States has consistently supported the Contadora process. We believe that this regional approach is the only way to produce a durable solution. Our objectives in Nicaragua, which Assistant Secretary Abrams has just described to you, are fully consistent with the 21 points. We would welcome, and we would support, an agreement that achieved the comprehensive, verifiable, and simultaneous implementation of the Document of Objectives.

While we support the Contadora process, we do not necessarily endorse each and every action by the Contadora countries. Largely because Sandinista intransigence has frustrated efforts to achieve an agreement, we have seen a tendency for Contadora to stray from its original objectives. Some members have promoted piecemeal solutions which we believe would only detract from the efforts to achieve a durable peace. Such partial solutions would tend to benefit Nicaragua and reduce the incentive of the Sandinistas to negotiate seriously on key issues. The Central American democracies, the countries most affected by the problem, also disagree with this piecemeal approach.

Last June, following the inability of the five Central American countries to reach an agreement among themselves on unresolved portions of the acta, the Contadora countries presented them with a new version which they described as the "final draft." The Central American democracies found this draft to be inadequate on several grounds, and we agreed with them.

For one thing, the June draft failed to address fully the political issues of national reconciliation and democratization. These are crucial ingredients to peace and are specifically called for in the Document of Objectives, but the June draft did little more than pay them lip service. This was a fatal flaw in the view of the Central American democracies. At a summit meeting just a few weeks earlier, the four democratic presidents had been lectured by Daniel Ortega about "revolutionary democracy" in Nicaragua; Ortega insisted that his Sandinista party was the "vanguard" of the people with a historic right to rule, and neither bullets nor ballots would ever drive it from power. The four presidents realized that Ortega was using an entirely different vocabulary when talking about pluralism and democracy. They recognized that in any agreement, the political terms must be spelled out clearly and Nicaragua's obligations must be established precisely so that there could be no doubt about what the Sandinistas were required to do. Lacking adequate provisions on political issues, the June draft was not comprehensive.

The June draft also did not fully address the issue of verification. The whole annex on verification was only a rough draft. Key questions were unresolved; for example, there was no agreement on the membership of the various commissions, what rights they would have (such as access to military facilities), and who would pay for the various mechanisms.

Moreover, the June draft would not implement the Document of Objectives in a simultaneous manner. With the Central Americans unable to resolve key military and security issues during negotiations in May, the June draft sought to sidestep the issue. It proposed that arms talks be delayed until after the agreement had been signed, ratified, and entered into force. The Central American democracies rejected this "Sign now, negotiate later" approach. They were not going to "buy a pig in a poke." They wanted at least the basic military and security issues to be decided before they signed, not after.

I should point out that although Nicarauga said it was willing to sign the June draft, it added the condition that future arms talks must be conducted on its terms. The Sandinistas have made clear that they will not even discuss placing any limits on the size of their army, the largest in Central America, or on most of the huge arsenal they have received from the Soviets. This in effect stymies achievement of one of Contadora's main goals--restoring a regional balance of power.

The Central American democracies informed the Contadora countries of the deficiencies they saw in the June draft and indicated their desire for further negotiations to strenghten the agreement. In July, however, Nicaragua filed suit against Costa Rica and Honduras at the International Court of Justice. This action violated the Act of Bogota which says that parties should not seek a juridical resolution of a dispute while an active negotiating process is underway. Costa Rica and Honduras, infuriated by the Sandinistas' bad faith, have refused to participate in further negotiations while the court cases are pending.

With the negotiating process blocked by the Sandinistas, the Contadora countries and others have been looking for new approaches. Last November, the Secretaries General of the UN and the OAS launched a joint initiative. They offered a "menu of services" available from their organizations to support Contadora. We believe that these organiations, particularly the OAS as the regional body, could play a useful role in facilitating the implementation of an agreement. Of course, first an agreement must be reached, and this is the task Contadora seeks to facilitate.

Last month, the eight Contadora and Support Group Foreign Ministers plus the UN and OAS Secretaries General visited Central America in an effort to revive the process. They were looking for common ground on which to resume the negotiations. The Central American democracies expressed their continuing desire for a political solution, and they stressed that the key to lasting peace was democratic political change in Nicaragua. President Azcona of Honduras sent a letter to his counterparts in the eight Contadora and Support Group countries explaining that the crisis in Central America was not an international conflict between countries, but rather an internal conflict in Nicaragua spilling over its borders; this internal conflict was caused by the lack of democracy in Nicaragua and the Sandinstas' efforts to consolidate a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship aligned with the Soviet Union and Cuba. The democracies stressed that the Sandinistas must enter into a process of dialogue and national reconciliation with their opposition.

Unfortunately, the Sandinistas remain intransigent. The communique they issued during the Contadora visit demonstrated their desire for a piecemeal, bilateral approach which would relieve them of the obligations of a comprehensive, verifiable, and simultaneous Contadora settlement. They called for talks with the United States, Honduras, and Costa Rica, as if those could really get the root of the problem. They refused to withdraw their cases at the World Court against Costa Rica and Honduras so that negotiations could resume. Most importantly, they showed no signs that they were willing to enter into a dialogue with their own people.

Last month, Assistant Secretary Abrams and I met in Miami with the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica to discuss some ideas his government had for overcoming the problems caused by Sandinista intransigence. President Arias, a man dedicated to democracy who sees political change in Nicaragua as his country's only long-term protection from the Sandinistas, is seeking a formula within the Contadora framework to address the specific issues of national reconciliation and democratization. He has called for a summit meeting with the presidents of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras for February 15, and he may formally unveil his proposals at that time.

The United States stands ready to cooperate with Contadora and the Central America democracies and to do what it can to support the negotiating process. In 1984, my predecessor conducted nine rounds of bilateral talks with the Sandinistas at the request of Contadora. We suspended these talks when it became clear that the Sandinistas were attempting to use them not to complement Contadora but to replace it. Essentially, they sought a bilateral accord with the United States which would resolve their most pressing problems and leave them free to walk away from Contadora, the commitments they would be required to make in order to fulfill the Document of Objectives, and ultimately the commitments to democracy to Nicaragua's people they made in 1979. We have stated that we are ready to resume bilateral talks as soon as the Sandinistas engage in a dialogue with all elements of their opposition, including the democratic resistance. We view our position as an incentive for the Sandinistas to enter into a process of national reconciliation.

The Sandinistas try to convince all who will still listen that the conflict is a bilateral one between Nicaragua and the United States. Fewer and fewer people are buying this line, however, as they come to realize that the real problem is between the Sandinista regime and its own people, and between Nicaragua and its democratic neighbors. We believe that until the Sandinistas are ready to come to terms with their own people, there is nothing to be gained in bilateral talks.

Since becoming the President's Special Envoy last March, I have made ten trips to the region. I have made clear that the United States maintains the negotiating half of its two-track policy. We want a good agreement, not a half-baked solution that will merely lead to more conflict in the future. Like the Central American democracies, we reject the piecemeal approach. Like them, we also want a democratic outcome.

Last month, I visited five of the Contadora and Support Group capitals and explained that we welcome their efforts to revive the negotiating process. I urged them to listen closely to the Central American democracies, who are the ones most familiar with the realities of the region and with whom they have much more in common than Sandinista Nicaragua. We hope that they are listening and that the views of the Central American democracies are given the consideration they clearly deserve.

We are hopeful that, aware that the Sandinista regime is the core of the problem, the Contadora countries will now be prepared to tackle the difficult political issues of national reconciliation and democratization in Nicaragua. Some of the Contadora countries, while recognizing the Marxist-Leninist nature of the Sandinista regime, have been hesitant to promote democratic political change out of concern that this was interference in Nicaragua's internal affairs. I believe that at least some of them have now come to recognize that insisting on national reconciliation and democratization is not intervention; Nicaragua specifically agreed to this when it signed the Document of Objectives in 1983. Thus, Contadora has a mandate to promote democracy and an obligation to ensure that the Sandinistas live up to their commitment.

The Sandinistas are committed Marxist-Leninist revolutionaires who will only negotiate in earnest when under pressure. The increasing pressure on the regime from the democratic resistance will give the Sandinistas an incentive to abandon their intransigence and to negotiate seriously. Even as pressure on the Sandinistas mounts through our aid to the democratic resistance, the door to peace is left open. It is up to the Sandinistas to walk through that door.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELLIOTT ABRAMS

I. Support for the Nicaraguan Resistance is part of a broader strategy

U.S. support for Nicaraguans fighting the Sandinistas is an essential element of a comprehensive strategy for Central America.

There are compelling moral arguments in favor of U.S. support for the Nicaraguan resistance. They have to do with a revolution betrayed; with the bravery of thousands of young Nicaraguan peasants and intellectuals fighting a backward dictatorship in the process of fusing with the totalitarianism of the modern Soviet empire; with the role of the United States in keeping alive the flame of freedom in today's world.

The strategic arguments in favor of U.S. support for the Nicaraguan resistance are just as compelling. Our national security requires us to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining a strategic foothold and further undermining democracy in Central America. Sandinista consolidation in Nicaragua would be a double threat to democracy in Central America, leading to the danger if not the inevitability of further communist expansion and to the danger of an ugly resurgence of right-wing extremism in reaction to the heightened communist threat. Our friends and allies in this nearby area need our help to meet these common challenges.

As the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America observed three years ago, rarely do moral and strategic considerations coincide as they do in Central America.

While agreeing with much of this, some argue that support for the resistance will get us nowhere (or at least nowhere that we want to go), and that there are other, better ways to protect our interests. In considering that argument, I would like to start by looking at our overall strategy, then consider our relations with Nicaragua and the why, what, and how of our efforts to improve them.

II. U.S. Policy Is Comprehensive and Long-Term

There are no short-term solutions to the Central American crisis.

There are, in theory, two quick fixes. One would be direct U.S. military intervention to remove the regime in Nicaragua. No one in the Administration is advocating this, and no one of you or the American public would wish us to. In fact, our policy is designed to protect our national interests without resorting to direct U.S. military action.

The other quick fix would be to try to force the Central American democracies to accept Nicaraguan proposals on security arrangements. Let's be honest. That is a prescription for disaster camouflaged as a diplomatic solution. Pieces of paper alone are not going to stop the Sandinistas.

So whatever the theory, in practice the truth is that neither of these quick fixes would be a fix at all.

The problems of Central America require patient, sustained U.S. efforts on many interrelated fronts at once.

Over the past three or four years, with the help of the Congress and of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, we have developed and begun to implement a comprehensive program designed to work over the long haul.

We believe it is working. We believe it is working because its combination of measures, from defense to negotiation, and from development to the painstaking building of democracy, address all of the causes of conflict as they actually play out in Central America.

Let me list six causes of conflict for you, together with what we are doing about them.

First, Central America became vulnerable to violence and Communist penetration because economic growth alone proved insufficient to eliminate inherited inequalities between the landed rich and the landless poor.

> The policy we are implementing supports social and economic reform. We want the peasants and the workers to be shareholders in Central America's future. Our primary emphasis is on evolutionary change through equitable development, education, and the creation of new opportunities. But we respect the positions of our democratic allies. In El Salvador, the agrarian reform whose implementation we are supporting is as far-reaching as those undertaken during the Mexican or the Bolivian revolutions.

Second, when people began to stand up for their rights, most of Central America's political systems (except for Costa Rica's long-standing democracy) proved too closed to provide a real outlet for either new social groups or the awakening poor.

> Our policy strongly supports opening up the region's politics through regular electoral competition and democratic processes. That is our position in El Salvador and Guatemala, and it is our position in Nicaragua. El Salvador and Guatemala have both in the last three years repeatedly held elections that were not only free but highly competitive. Nicaragua's Sandinistas refuse to even talk to those who resist their dictatorship.

Third, reliance on violence to resolve conflict became ingrained.

This is a second reason we are fostering democracy. Democracy is the best mechanism there is for peaceful social progress and peaceful political change. It is why we are working to strengthen judicial processes throughout Central America. It is why we have insisted on an end to death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala and why we would be delighted to see an end to the "divine mobs" and secret police of Nicaragua's Ministry of the Interior.

Fourth, the downturn in the global economy, aggravated by the guerrilla warfare supported by the Soviet bloc from Nicaraguan territory, has severely damaged the economy of El Salvador and driven capital out of Central America generally, increasing both suffering and potential instability.

That is why substantial financial and economic assistance is essential, first to help stabilize the region's economies, then to help restore growth and regional cooperation. It is vital that we continue to meet the agreed Kissinger Commission goals.

Fifth, their numbers have declined as the population has turned away from them, but the Salvadoran guerrillas have remained a formidable military force because the Soviets have used Cuba and Nicaragua to provide the outside support needed to operate despite the opposition of most Salvadorans.

That is why U.S. military assistance is required. In fact, the military component of our policy has, if anything, been too small. Three years ago, the Bipartisan Commission warned: "The worst possible policy for El Salvador is to provide just enough aid to keep the war going, but too little to wage it successfully." We heeded the Commission's warning on El Salvador. The results have been far better than most observers believed possible.

Sixth, Nicaragua's internal repression, military buildup and ties to the Soviet bloc are becoming a permanent source of instability in the entire region. Cuban agents entered Managua with the Sandinistas in July 1979; 3 months later, the Cuban contingent had grown to 200. Today, excluding Cuban civilians, who since the liberation of Grenada are mainly young males who have served in the Cuban militia, the U.S. intelligence community estimates the Cuban military and security presence at between 2,000 and 2,500. Peace in Central America will be impossible as long as this military-subversive apparatus remains in place unchecked.

The need to defend democracy and to defeat Soviet-backed subversion and militarization in Nicaragua and in Central America as a whole is where the Nicaraguan resistance forces fit in -- not as a solution by themselves, but as part of a strategy to induce the Sandinistas to change their behavior or face the possibility of losing power entirely.

The individual elements of this strategy can and indeed must be combined flexibly through diplomacy to meet changing situations.

III. The Sandinistas Started Nasty

It is sometimes said that the Sandinistas are just a group of Third World reformers who have been forced by the United States and a handful of reactionaries to suspend temporarily a few freedoms in self defense and ally themselves with the Soviet Union. This proposition is false.

-- The Sandinistas have always been a minority (they still proudly refer to themselves as a "vanguard"), but once the immensely popular revolution against Somoza ended in 1979 with them sharing power in the government, they set out to monopolize power in Nicaragua and to help overthrow neighboring governments beginning with El Salvador.

-- The key to their confidence was support from the Soviet bloc. They believed this support, which they had obtained years before the fall of Somoza and which they equated with "the forces of history," would enable them to overcome resistance both at home and abroad.

-- So they saw collaboration with true democrats and diplomatic negotiations simply as a tactic to divide their neighbors and neutralize the United States. They were playing the old broad popular front game advocated by the Comintern in the 1930s.

U.S. objectives after Somoza fell in 1979 were to persuade the Sandinistas and their democratic allies in the new Nicaraguan government that the goals of the Nicaraguan nation could be achieved through democracy and peaceful relations with all members of the inter-American community, and that, conversely, their Communist alliances were dangerous to them as well as to others.

-- For a year and a half after the fall of Somoza, U.S. efforts centered on political bridge-building and substantial economic assistance for the reconstruction of Nicaragua.

-- This attempt by the Carter Administration to build friendly relations was ignored by the Sandinistas, who secretly sought Soviet bloc aid to help turn their guerrilla forces into a powerful modern army and build an internal security system along Cuban lines.

-- By the fall of 1980, despite specific warnings that this would jeopardize our assistance and our relations, the Sandinistas were cooperating actively with a Soviet-Cuban strategy to supply arms and training to guerrilla forces in El Salvador.

-- By early 1981, after the extent of Sandinista participation in the Soviet bloc intervention in El Salvador had become clear, the Carter Administration suspended, then the Reagan Adminstration terminated, U.S. assistance to the Nicaraguan government as required by law.

-- By that time the Sandinistas had driven non-Marxists out of the government, repressed independent groups, established intimate ties with Cuba and the Soviet bloc generally, and given full support to the guerrillas in El Salvador and were beginning to sponsor terrorism in Honduras and Costa Rica.

-- But we continued our efforts to negotiate. In August 1981, we sent Assistant Secretary Enders to Managua to invite the Sandinistas to exchange proposals so that positive relations and assistance could be resumed.

-- We put those proposals in writing, but the Sandinistas did not respond.

-- Attempts to reason with the Sandinistas on the basis of positive inducements were going nowhere.

-- It was then, nearly two and one half years after Somoza fell, that we decided to support Nicaraguan patriots fighting the Sandinistas. If carrots were not enough, maybe a stick would help.

-- At the same time, we continued to probe for negotiating openings.

-- In the spring of 1982, at the suggestion of Mexican President Lopez Portillo, we again offered, in writing, to resume positive relations and assistance if they met regional concerns. Again the Sandinistas took no action.

-- After the 1982 elections in El Salvador, the Sandinistas actually expanded their support for the guerrillas in El Salvador. We asked the Nicaraguan government to close down the command and control center the Salvadoran extremists were operating in the outskirts of Managua -- and when they professed ignorance of its existence, we offered to send down a technical team to help them locate it. The Sandinistas did not even bother to reply.

-- Negotiations involving the Sandinistas have taken place almost continually since then, often under the auspices of the Contadora process that began in 1983. The United States has supported these negotiations through Secretary Shultz' 1984 visit to Managua and the activities of three Special Envoys, including nine rounds of bilateral talks, one in Atlanta, and eight in Manzanillo, Mexico.

-- As soon as the Sandinistas accept the necessity of face to face talks with the democratic resistance spawned by their intransigence and repression, we will sit down to talk directly to them again.

IV. U.S. Negotiating Objectives

By the summer of 1982, what we had learned from our repeated efforts to engage in concrete, meaningful talks had led us to evolve four major objectives for negotiating with the Sandinistas. These objectives reflect our security needs and those of our friends as well as our and their desires for democracy. What we seek in Nicaragua is fully consistent with our support for democracy, development and security throughout Central America.

Those objectives are still valid today. They are:

- Ending Nicaraguan support for guerrilla groups;
- Cutting Nicaraguan military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet bloc;
- Reducing Nicaragua's military strength to levels that would restore military equilibrium in the area;
- Fulfillment of the Sandinistas' own original promises to build democratic pluralism.

These objectives have been at the heart of international diplomacy involving Central America since we first articulated them in August 1982.

In October 1982, under Costa Rican leadership, a group of eight democratic states developed a comprehensive set of proposals to reduce tensions. The San Jose statement, of which we were both prime movers and a signatory together with the other democracies, incorporated our objectives in full. Nicaragua refused even to meet the Costa Rican Foreign Minister to discuss them.

In January 1983, the Contadora process began. Compare the four U.S. objectives with the substance of the Contadora Document of Objectives agreed to on September 7, 1983, by the four Contadora sponsors and all five Central American countries:

- We seek an end to Nicaraguan support for guerrilla groups: The Document of Objectives calls for an end to support for subversion.
- We want Nicaragua to sever its military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet bloc: The Document of Objectives calls for the proscription of foreign military bases and the reduction and eventual elimination of foreign military advisers and troops.
- We seek reduction of Nicaragua's military strength to levels that would restore military equilibrium in the area: The Document of Objectives calls for the reduction of current inventories of arms and military personnel.
- We seek fulfillment of the original Sandinista promises to support democratic pluralism: The Document of Objectives calls for the establishment of democratic systems of government based on genuinely open elections.
- Finally, we seek a diplomatic solution that is verifiable and enforceable: The Document of Objectives calls for adequate means of verification and control.

If actually implemented simultaneously on a verifiable and enforceable basis, the substance of the 21 Contadora objectives is virtually identical with our own evaluation of what is necessary to satisfy U.S. interests in the area.

That is why, despite the bilateral record detailed above, we saw in Nicaragua's acceptance of the Contadora Document of Objectives the possibility that our own objectives might ultimately be reached through negotiations.

As the the years have gone by, Sandinista abuses and intransigence have increased, and the Contadora process has sometimes seemed to look the other way. We have increased the pressures. But we have also constantly probed the Sandinistas on their intentions. U.S. pressure on Nicaragua is not pressure for pressure's sake. It has diplomatic and political goals.

The basic fact is this: If the Sandinistas implement these principles in a way in which we can have confidence -- whether on the basis of a formal treaty or not -- its neighbors will do the same, and so will we. Democracy, after all, is the best verification mechanism. The pressure will have worked, members of the resistance forces will have been able to lay down their arms, our concerns will have been alleviated, and a political solution will have been achieved in Central America.

V. U.S. Support for the Nicaraguan Resistance

U.S. support for the democratic resistance in Nicaragua is designed to advance these broader objectives. Once it became clear that normal diplomatic and economic inducements were not enough to persuade the Sandinistas to compromise, a program was begun to aid an anti-Sandinista group that was already in existence. The resistance has achieved a measure of success not solely or even primarily because of our efforts, but because resistance has been stimulated by continuing Sandinista repression and by defections from the Sandinista ranks.

U.S. support for the resistance is intended to help limit and ultimately end the conflict in Central America, not to widen it. It is designed to either induce the Sandinistas to change their assumptions and the aggressive actions that flow from them, or, if they do not, to help put the Nicaraguan people themselves into a position to rid themselves of the Sandinistas.

The growth of the resistance and its transformation from a group centered initially around a few hundred ex-National Guardsmen to a peasant army of nearly 20,000 fighters, many of whose leaders are former Sandinistas, make clear it is an authentic, indigenous movement responsive to the democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people.

Some critics of U.S. support have suggested that it has been counterproductive, that it has radicalized the Sandinistas and helped them to consolidate their power.

The opposite is true. The Sandinistas set a radical course from the very start. As detailed above, they decided to embrace the Cubans and Soviets and to support guerrilla warfare elsewhere in Central America even before they came to power, long before there was any pressure from the U.S., from military exercises or from U.S.-supported Nicaraguans.

The Sandinistas have scored many propaganda points against the Nicaraguan resistance fighters, particularly outside of Nicaragua. But in fact the armed resistance has succeeded in preventing the Sandinistas from using their superior military force to consolidate their power. By 1982, democratic groups inside Nicaragua were increasingly demoralized by Sandinista repression. When anti-Sandinista nationalists took up arms, large numbers of peasant militia members deserted and chose to fight to defend their country against the Soviet bloc and the foreign "internationalists." Their resistance kept Nicaragua's future in doubt and gave fresh hope to all Nicaraguans who opposed the Sandinistas.

The Sandinistas' attempt to shrug all this off by labeling their opponents "Somocistas" fighting as "mercenaries" in a "Yankee war" of aggression has proved both less accurate and less effective than they obviously hoped.

The main resistance organization, the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), has become a focus for Nicaraguans from all walks of life and political conviction. Many of them have different ideas about how to regain the revolution that the Sandinistas stole from them, but they realize that their common resistance to the Sandinistas is more important than their individual differences.

This multiplicity of views and talent has resulted in growing pains for UNO. We expect the UNO coalition to continue to broaden, both inside and outside Nicaragua. It is only natural that new leaders should emerge. We view this effort to make room for new ideas as a healthy and necessary step in the development of a democratic opposition.

The leaders of UNO, Adolfo Calero, Arturo Cruz, and Alfonso Robelo, share with the new talent that has joined UNO a history of opposition to Somoza. All three actively opposed Somoza while he was still in power. Calero was jailed by Somoza; first Robelo then Cruz became Junta members with the Sandinistas.

The largest guerrilla forces belong to the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), headed by Calero since 1983. Other important resistance organizations include the Southern Opposition Bloc (BOS, which grew out of ARDE, built by Robelo and former Sandinista Comandante Eden Pastora), and MISURASATA and KISAN fighters active among the Indians of the Atlantic Coast.

Resistance fighters are overwhemingly rural youths. Most were in their early teens, and many even younger, when Somoza fell in 1979. Their struggle is not on behalf of the old dictatorship--it is against the new dictatorship armed by Cuba and the Soviet Union. They fight in response to Sandinista attempts to control their farming, their churches, their schools, and in some cases their indigenous cultures. Many joined the resistance in preference to being drafted to fight for the Sandinistas against their friends and neighbors. In defending their families and communities, these young Nicaraguans are fighting above all else for self-determination.

The $100 million in renewed aid to the resistance is helping the resistance to improve its military skills and capabilities. By the time it was approved in mid-October 1986, however, the previous allotment of U.S. aid, $27 million in humanitarian assistance, had been essentially exhausted since the end of July. New supplies have met basic needs for food, medical care, uniforms and military materiel. The result is that the number of resistance combatants inside Nicaragua has grown by thousands in the last three months.

Military improvements have been equalled by important strides in the resistance's political activities, which are essential to the task of increasing active support for the resistance in Nicaragua and to the ultimate victory of democratic forces.

Less than a month ago, on January 10, UNO and BOS issued an agreement on joint political goals, the "Statement of the Commitment to Democracy of the Nicaraguan Resistance." The statement calls for political pluralism, representative democracy, a state of law that respects and guarantees fundamental human rights as recognized in international conventions, a fair system of justice, economic freedom with guaranteed property rights, and respect for the cultural identity and political [illegible] indigenous groups of the Atlantic coast. UNO and BOS also call for the dismantling of the Sandinista system of party control of the army and police forces, and the subordination of such forces to national civilian authorities in the democratic Nicaragua of the future. This document is the product of extensive discussions among UNO and BOS leaders, and it was considered by the UNO and BOS Assemblies. The UNO Assembly, a body including representatives of thirteen Nicaraguan political, labor, business and ethnic organizations in exile, debated it at a two-day session in San Jose, Costa Rica, last November.

Since January 4, 1987, Radio Liberacion, the official voice of UNO, has been on the air carrying a message of hope and resistance to the Nicaraguan people. It provides an objective source of information on world and domestic news, and it gives resistance leaders a chance to explain their political message directly to the people of Nicaragua. Radio Liberacion is heard throughout the country for twelve hours each day.

UNO has developed a diplomatic strategy to get its message across to Latin American and other governments; it has a functioning Secretariat for International Relations with representatives in several Latin American and European capitals. In advance of the January Central American tour of the Contadora foreign ministers with the UN and OAS Secretaries General, the UNO directors sent a letter outlining the UNO position on negotiations and detailing the offers for dialogue the resistance has made since late 1982.

Indicative of UNO's success in broadening its political base is the addition of two new key personnel to the directorate staff:

> The former President of the Nicaraguan Social Democratic Party, Luis Rivas Leiva, became an UNO political coordinator.

> A former Pastora commander, Luis "Wicho" Rivas Leal, was named military coordinator to strengthen civilian control of the resistance forces.

In November, the Nicaraguan Human Rights Association was established headed by Marta Patricia Baltodano, a highly respected human rights activist. Funded by the $3 million authorized by Congress for human rights programs and now fully staffed, this independent group is monitoring human rights performance by both sides in the civil war and is providing training in human rights and the laws of war to resistance forces.

These and other efforts have made clear beyond doubt the democratic commitment of the Nicaraguan resistance. They have also given the resistance the tools it needs to project its democratic message to Nicaragua and to the world. The Sandinistas are doing their part, too: their diplomatic intransigence and their bogus constitution, largely suspended less than four hours after it was issued, have added to their isolation from both the Nicaraguan people and their democratic neighbors. More than ever, the resistance is poised and equipped to advance its cause on the political, military and diplomatic fronts. As always, they ask for American aid but not for American troops. Our continued support is essential to their prospects for success.

VI. The Diplomatic Situation

Our objective remains a political solution to the Central American conflict. But let me speak bluntly. Nicaragua is at the root of the military conflict in Central America, and there will be no peace in the region until the problem posed by Nicaragua has been dealt with.

We support the Contadora process. That process, initiated almost four years ago, is designed to bring about a comprehensive solution to the problems afflicting the region. We have long stated that an acceptable agreement must be comprehensive; its commitments must enter into force simultaneously; it must have adequate provisions for verification. And it must be acceptable to the Central Americans. An agreement cannot be imposed from outside the region. It cannot be imposed by us, and it cannot be imposed by the Contadora Group.

All of us are looking for a formula that will bring peace to this troubled region. Who could want peace more than President Duarte of El Salvador, a man who has seen his country ravaged for almost seven years by a communist-led insurgency. Who could want peace more than President Azcona of Honduras, whose country has suffered the direct consequences of two major Sandinista incursions during the past year. Who could want peace more than President Cerezo of Guatemala as he leads his country from military rule to civilian-led democracy. And who could want peace more than Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, president of a nation without an Army, who looks across an undefended border at the largest military force in Central American history.

Yet it is the leaders of these same Central American democracies who steadfastly resist pressures from outside the region -- from the Contadora and the Support Group, from European democrats, and even from members of our own Congress -- to accept an unbalanced agreement merely for the sake of having an agreement in the vain hope that such an agreement would somehow contain violence in the region.

The Central American democracies are increasingly vocal in their judgment that democracy in Nicaragua is the key to peace in Central America. Costa Rican President Arias is attempting to create a plan for a cease-fire and a transition to democratic rule in Nicaragua; this plan may be unveiled at a forthcoming meeting of the presidents of the four Central American democracies.

The President's Special Envoy for Central America, Ambassador Philip Habib, one of our most distinguished career diplomats, is consulting with our allies. Since assuming his responsibilities in March 1986, Ambassador Habib has made 10 trips to the region. His active diplomacy is tangible evidence of our determination to keep the negotiating doors open.

Our experience in seven years of dealing with the Sandinista leadership makes clear that the Marxist-Leninists in Managua will negotiate seriously only when they are convinced that they have more to lose than to gain if they continue to refuse to sit down with those who want an open, pluralistic society.

VII. Prospects

We still have a long way to go. Nicaragua is clearly the major stumbling block to peace in Central America. While at times ostensibly cooperating with Contadora, the Sandinistas have persistently tried to reorient the negotiating process to their own advantage.

On the internal scene, the Sandinistas' periodic gestures to the opposition have always lacked substance and have been reversed. The independent daily *La Prensa* is closed indefinitely. The state of emergency has been prolonged despite the promulgation of a new constitution in January 1987.

The military pressure by the resistance has given strength to diplomatic initiatives and other efforts to pressure Nicaragua to fulfill its commitments to pluralism and basic human rights. Ironically, the fear of more direct U.S. intervention has galvanized some Latin Americans and Europeans into pressing the Sandinistas to reduce their ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union. There is a consensus, expressed by the Bipartisan Commission and shared privately by the Contadora negotiators, that Nicaragua's military ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union are an obstacle to peace and development in the entire region.

The Sandinista's periodic negotiating postures have tended to be cosmetic. These tactical moves are largely the result of pressures -- the pressures created by the armed resistance, by our support for Nicaragua's neighbors, the end of Soviet and Cuban influence in Grenada, and growing Western European criticism.

But no pressure challenges the Sandinistas more directly than the growing opposition they face at home.

- The Sandinistas had assumed that their massive military and security apparatus would silence their internal critics.
- But neither the Church, labor, business nor the press have been cowed. Despite enormous pressures, they have continued to defend themselves and their principles.
- The armed resistance is fighting not because they want a return to Somocismo as the Sandinistas claim, but because Nicaraguans fought Somoza for freedom, not just to fall prey to the Soviet bloc.

On Easter Sunday 1984, Nicaragua's Catholic Bishops said explicitly that "the Nicaraguans that have risen in arms against the government" must be allowed to participate in a dialogue for peace. If sustained, U.S. support for the resistance could achieve what diplomacy alone has not: to create doubts in the minds of the Sandinistas about their assumption that Soviet bloc support guarantees that they can do what they want.

Pressures have at one point or another already forced the Sandinistas to think about how to deal with such key issues as:

- their support for the Salvadoran guerrillas;
- the presence of Cuban advisors in Nicaragua;
- trying to use elections to reduce internal opposition; and
- attempting to turn Contadora into a means of stopping external support for the resistance.

To date, these moves have ultimately proved wholly tactical. The Sandinistas have yet to give up anything significant, either domestically or in their ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union.

We believe they will not give up anything they are not forced to give up.

VIII. Conclusion

Secretary Shultz has stressed repeatedly that the complexity of the Central American crisis demands equally sophisticated and responsible U.S. policies.

As noted at the beginning of this statement, our strategy seeks to apply many elements simultaneously. The Administration was pleased to support last year's move in Congress to add $300 million to our fiscal year 1986 aid to the Central American democracies. This was a positive contribution to our regional approach to the defense of democracy in Central America. We shared the widespread disappointment in Congress when the final terms of the continuing resolution prevented the release of these additional funds. Additional authorization is not needed now. The funds have been authorized. The problem is that they have not been appropriated in a form which enables us to provide them as the additional assistance the democracies need. This $300 million is now included in the Administration's supplemental budget request. We stand ready to cooperate with you in having it passed and signed into law.

Support for the Nicaraguan resistance is also an essential component of our regional policy to promote democracy and peace. It is the only element that directly counters the Sandinistas' plan to monopolize power in Nicaragua on their own terms. In the comprehensive Central American outlook, the resistance is indispensable to the successful interplay between economic and military assistance, diplomacy and negotiations.

To achieve real progress, pressure on the Sandinistas must be relentless and there must be a diplomatic alternative open to them. This means that U.S. support for Nicaraguan resistance forces must continue. It also means that we shall continue to support the Contadora objectives, including the Contadora goal of internal dialogue in Nicaragua, which the resistance embraces and the Sandinistas reject.

All of Nicaragua's neighbors accept democratic principles of national reconciliation. All of Nicaragua's neighbors have joined in cooperating to resist Sandinista pressures -- often setting aside major differences of their own in their conviction that the totalitarian ambitions and Communist ties of the Sandinistas are a barrier to peace for the entire region.

The odd man out is Nicaragua, which also must be brought in -- and kept in -- the process. The democratic resistance is indispensable to that end.

The choices for the United States are clear:

(1) to walk away, abandoning the Nicaraguan people and our democratic friends in Central America to fend for themselves;

(2) to attempt a containment policy, accepting communist rule in Managua (and the defeat of the democratic hopes of the Nicaraguan people) but seeking to sustain democracy elsewhere in Central America with massive expenditures and military deployments; or

(3) to continue our current two-track policy, backing the resistance as offering the only prospect for negotiating a democratic solution in Central America that protects our national interests.

Our assessment is that we can and must help the democracies to develop through economic and security assistance, but that only pressure applied directly to Nicaragua can produce gains that will decrease the risk of Soviet and Cuban domination of Central America. If we are correct in this assessment, and experience suggests that we are, then the alternative to our current two-track policy of support for the resistance and negotiations would be to further shore up Nicaragua's neighbors against Sandinista aggression. The alternative approach would be very difficult and would carry at best limited assurances that it could work. The Kissinger Commission analyzed what containment in this situation would require and where it would lead. Its findings, annexed to this statement, led it to reject containment on the grounds that the attempt would be more likely to create garrison states and doom democracy than to bring peace unless U.S. forces became directly involved.

On December 16, speaking to journalists in San Jose, Costa Rica, President Arias said:

> I want to make clear to you my position, which is the same that I expressed in Washington.
>
> It would cause me great sorrow if, because of what has happened in the U.S. -- the so-called Irangate -- aid to the contras is terminated and nothing more . . .
>
> That this results in allowing the Sandinista regime to consolidate, to not change, to not yield, to not compromise, and everything remains the same. I would say to you that to me as a Costa Rican it would cause great regret, and I believe that it would hurt the Nicaraguan people much more than me because they have fought so hard to get rid of one tyrant, one dictator, and seven years later they have nine . . .
>
> [If] this scandal results only in Congress not approving more military aid, and leaves matters in Nicaragua as they are, I think it would be regretted by the Contadora group, the support group, by the other Central American nations, by the whole world. Because -- let's not fool ourselves -- although the world does not support the war, this doesn't mean it concurs in the status quo in Nicaragua. There is a distinction between not concurring in a military outcome but wanting important change in the Managua regime . . ."

Like President Arias, we seek a democratic outcome for the struggle of the people of Nicaragua. The costs of failure are too high: a direct Soviet challenge to U.S. security interests not limited to Central America alone, accompanied by spreading political extremism generated by Soviet support for totalitarian elements and by local reactions against it, all this creating a dynamic that would risk the future wellbeing of millions of our neighbors.

Just as democracy came to El Salvador, it can come to Nicaragua. As in El Salvador, it can be won by Central Americans who are willing to defend the democratic cause and serve our common interests defeating a Soviet-supported strategy to gain new satellites -- and new military beachheads -- in this hemisphere. For our part, we need to support our friends with patience, confidence and steadfastness. The elements of a successful policy are in place. Now let's combine our efforts to make it work.

ANNEX

The Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, issued in January 1984, states the conclusions of the Commission this way at pages 114-115:

Theoretically, the United States and its friends could . . . try to contain a Nicaragua which continued to receive military supplies on the present scale. In pratical [sic] terms, however, such a course would present major difficulties. In the absence of a political settlement, there would be little incentive for the Sandinistas to act responsibly, even over a period of time, and much inducement to escalate their efforts to subvert Nicaragua's neighbors. To contain the export of revolution would require a level of vigilance and sustained effort that would be difficult for Nicaragua's neighbors and even for the United States. A fully militarized and equipped Nicaragua, with excellent intelligence and command and control organizations, would weigh heavily on the neighboring counries of the region. This threat would be particularly acute for democratic, unarmed Costa Rica. It would have especially serious implications for vital U.S. interests in the Panama Canal. We would then face the prospect, over time, of the collapse of the other countries of Central America, bringing with it the spectre of Marxist domination of the entire region and thus the danger of a larger war.

The notion that the United States should cope with a Marxist-Leninist Nicaragua, militarily allied to the Soviet Union and Cuba, through long-term containment assumes an analogy between conditions in post-war Europe and the present circumstances of Central America. The experience of the post-war period, however, shows that containment is effective to back up local forces of stable allies fully capable of coping with internal conflict and subversio n from without. In such circumstances, the United States can help to assure the deterrence of overt military threats by contributing forces in place, or merely by strategic guarantees.

On the other hand, where internal insecurity is a chronic danger and where local governments are unable to deal with externally supported subversion, a strategy of containment has major disadvantages. It would risk the involvement of U.S. forces as surrogate policemen. Any significant deployment of U.S. forces in Central America would be very costly not just in a domestic political sense but in geo-strategic terms as well. The diversion of funds from the economic, social, medical, and educational development of the region into military containment would exacerbate poverty and encourage internal instability in each of the countries that became heavily militarized.

Furthermore . . . the creation of garrison states would almost certainly perpetuate the armies of the region as permanent political elites. The hopes of true democracy would not be enhanced.

Therefore, though the Commission believes that the Sandinista regime will pose a continuing threat to stability in the region, we do not advocate a policy of static containment.

LETTER FROM WILLIAM P. CLARK

September 30, 1981

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with the notification requirement set forth in Section 620(q) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (hereinafter, the "Act"), please be advised that I have determined, pursuant to delegations of authority issued thereunder, that it is in the national interest of the United States to furnish assistance under the Act to private sector organizations within the country of Nicaragua, notwithstanding that the Government of Nicaragua is more than six months in default in payment of principal and interest on loans made under the Act.

If the assistance in question were destined for the Government of Nicaragua, we would, of course, not waive the prohibition. However, all the recipients are private sector organizations, independent of the Nicaraguan Government. Their continued survival is crucial to the viability of pluralism and democracy in the country of Nicaragua. They merit our assistance.

Sincerely,

William P. Clark

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAMUEL T. DICKENS

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you members of the committee. I can think of no higher priority today for our nation's national security, furthered by supporting foreign policy initiatives, than to have a major focus on the Central American crisis. Though economic stagnation, poverty, unemployment, underemployment and a host of related economic and social problems have long plagued the region, more recent developments threaten our own security and thus demand the attention of all Americans. Now for the second time in fifty years we face a major projection of power by a totalitarian system external to the Western Hemisphere, threatening developing and stable democracies alike.

In the late thirties that threat came from Nazi Germany when Adolf Hitler made major efforts to subvert and influence Latin American nations. President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his State of the Union Message of January 1941, almost eleven full months before the Japanese launched their devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, plunging us into World War II, stated,

> "We cannot foretell tonight just when the acts of the dictators will ripen into an attack

> on this hemisphere and us. But we know enough by now to realize that it would be suicide to wait until they are in our front yard. Anyone, with an atlas and a reasonable knowledge of the sudden striking force of modern war, knows that it would be stupid to wait until a probable enemy has gained a foothold from which to attack. Old-fashioned common sense calls for the use of strategy which will prevent such an enemy from gaining a foothold in the first place."

Eight months after Pearl Harbor we had lost 183 merchant ships to German submarines, sunk entirely within the Caribbean Basin and it took us six months to sink the first U-boat. (The few German submarines, probably only six in number, were all based in German ports, unlike the threat we face today.)

We now face a totalitarian global threat more threatening, exceedingly more skillful, and far more successful in employing all aspects of warfare, during these so called times of peace, with psychological warfare, deception, disinformation, subversion and terrorism. We need to recall as an important element of this warfare that Soviet efforts to influence and control Latin American university systems had its origins more than sixty years ago. And since then university professors and students have been leading leftist and communist guerrilla groups in attacks on authority, whether rightist or constitutionally elected.

We would be exceedingly foolish not to at least have the foresight of President Roosevelt in our concern for the security of the hemisphere. And in fact over a succession of American presidents, Democrats and Republicans alike, our diplomats, in cooperation with our friends in the hemisphere, developed a constantly updated security system to protect the hemisphere. It is called the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, the "Rio Treaty," and it predates NATO by three years as it came into existence in 1947. In fact the best known operative clause of the NATO treaty, Article 5, which I quote, is virtually plagiarized from the Rio Treaty, " . . . an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or in North America shall be considered an attack against them all."

Significantly the Inter-American system responded to the threat of communism with the Caracas Declaration of Solidarity of 1954, and the Declaration of San Jose in 1960, by rejecting communism and its efforts to threaten the, ". . . sovereignty and political independence of the American States. . ."

Now we have another Cuba in the hemisphere, Nicaragua, clearly led by Marxist-Leninists. What is more, Nicaragua already is a Soviet base. It is my understanding that there exists a degree of congressional unity in that Democratic and Republican leadership acknowledge Nicaragua's comandantes as communists, but differ as to what to do about it. Most members of congress have said they would never let Nicaragua become a Soviet base.

What constitutes a Soviet base? Need it be the presence of Soviet military forces? In making my analysis I compare United States basing concepts in support of NATO to Soviet planning for Central America. U.S. Army and Air Force units have bases prepared for their deployment during times of heightened political tension. The logistics are in place. The ammunition, fuel, oil and in many cases needed weapons are there. The complete infrastructure to support military operations awaits the men themselves. Sometimes this only represents the fighting personnel, in other cases it requires the tactical aircraft manned by aircrew to complete the deployment.

But this is what the Soviets and Cubans have now in place in Nicaragua! Given the order Soviet Bear bombers and MIG-23 fighters based in Cuba can be in place within forty-five minutes. They can be manned by Soviets, or Cubans and Nicaraguans in the case of the jet fighters. How does the United States prevent this from happening? What are the Soviet leaders perception of our national will? Why would they be convinced that the United States would not tolerate Nicaragua becoming an operational Soviet base? Certainly current Congressional signals show a weakness in U.S. determination in support of the Rio Treaty or in resisting Soviet expansionism.

The fundamental question then is do you wait until the Soviets deploy their operational forces and then have the first head-to-head confrontation with the Soviets since the Cuban missile crisis? Do the Soviets then back down as they did in 1962, leaving in place a communist Cuba, a first for the New World? One has to make comparisons in relative strategic strength between the Soviet Union and the United States in 1962 and in 1987. Once deployed in Nicaragua would Soviets back down before United States threats of action? This is not a very pleasant scenario. It is rather obvious this scenario plays a major role in United States government thinking and planning today.

One might cite the Cuba Resolution first passed by the Senate in October 1962, and then reaffirmed in August of 1982, to show Senatorial determination. The Cuba Resolution states,

> "That the United States is determined - (a) to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force of the threat of force, its aggressive and subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere; (b) to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States; and (c) to work with the Organization of American States and with freedom-loving Cubans to support the aspirations of the Cuban people for self-determination."

It would appear obvious that the presence of thousands of Cubans in Nicaragua, not to mention over 100 Soviet military there as well, does not show much commitment by the U.S. Senate to, "The Cuba Resolution."

One could mention the administration has warned the Soviets not to introduce MIG-23, or other jet fighters to Nicaragua, in that would change the situation. But in fact the United States has tolerated the introduction of 12 MI-24/25D HIND helicopters, the most sophisticated attack helicopter (gun-ship) in the world. Additionally there are 35 MI-8/17 HIP helicopters in Nicaragua. Primarily they serve to expeditiously move troops, but they too function as "gun-ships."

Given the relatively small size of Nicaragua for jet fighter operations and the nature of the guerrilla forces the communist Nicaraguans are combating, HIPS and HINDS are far more effective than any MIG jet fighters. (I might add,I make this comment as a combat experienced fighter pilot, who commanded a fighter squadron in close air support missions for American and South Vietnamese infantryman. So our warning against introduction of MIG fighters merely provides a technicality for the Soviets to introduce weapon systems with less political visibility, which are far more effective for the job at hand.

In the final analysis then, if President Reagan and the Contras are not supported, an American Congress would leave the decision of when Nicaragua becomes an "operational" Soviet base, to the Soviets themselves.

THE CONTRAS.

Some Senators would propose eliminating all funding for the Contras, or Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters, using remaining funds to relocate these nationalist, democratic forces. What are the implications of such a move? At the outset this would remove any pressure on the communist Nicaraguan leadership to negotiate. Certainly there would exist no inducement to modify internal repression of their people.

If there were no armed democratic resistance the Nicaraguan leadership would have no limitations or restrictions in their efforts to subvert and terrorize their neighbors. Their record of actively working with terrorist organizations is clear and well documented in unclassified U.S. government publications. They have close allegiances with the Palestine Liberation Organization, Libya's Quadafi, the Spanish ETA, the Colombian M-19, and the Montoneros and Tupamaros of Argentina and Uruguay.

Without any limitations on Nicaragua's aggressive behaviour they would become the Libya of Latin America, a terrorist state training terrorists from Latin American countries. There is no reason to suggest otherwise as Nicaragua now entertains within its borders terrorists from each of the countries cited above as well as communists from Eastern European countries, Vietnam and North Korea.

The anti-communist Contras are criticized in many ways. Since nothing good can be said about the communist Sandinistas, all attention, for those desiring U.S. disinvolvement for whatever reasons, is directed against the Contras.

Some say, "They can't win!" Conditions are never cited. Do the questioners mean at this moment? Is this question asked on the basis of present appropriations from a Congress which has never shown any commitment, but rather turned a spigot, weakly on and off with dribbling assistance?

Should not the conditions be at least equivalent to the amount of support given to the Sandinistas in their broad front approach to overthrowing Anastasio Somoza? Why should not the Contras be able to win? Don't they now have at least three times the number of fighting forces the Sandinistas had when Somoza departed Nicaragua?

Remember Fidel Castro brought the various communist and left wing factions together in Cuba, demanding their cooperation. Hardly democratic and totally dictatorial. Arms from Cuba were flown to Panama by Panamanian pilots with cooperation of Panama's strongman Omar Torrijos. Then from Panama these arms were flown into Costa Rica. Costa Rica deliberately allowed the Sandinistas to use their territory for staging purposes.

On the diplomatic front Mexico gave total cooperation to the Sandinistas as did Venezuela. As Cuba's Fidel Castro pointed out, Somoza could never have been overthrown without the direct efforts of the United States. Somoza was completed isolated from all foreign support when the United States encouraged Israel to cut-off all ammunition deliveries. The Sandinista forces were provided Soviet artillery superior in range to anything possessed by the Nicaraguan National Guard.

The coup de grace was delivered by the Organization of American States when they conferred legitimacy on the broad front coalition led by Sandinistas in exchange for promises of political pluralism, respect for human rights and free elections. This action was unprecedented in the history of the Organization of American States which swears on basic tenants of "non-intervention" and "self-determination."

Why should not the United States actively develop the same international support for the Contras as was done for the Sandinistas? Key to the democratic resistance forces success is a United States commitment of support for them. They have never had this commitment, considering a wavering congress. They also have never been given the opportunity to achieve success with on and off again aid.

Some would set specific achievements to be accomplished by the anti-Sandinista forces in order to earn additional support. Taking and holding territory looms large in this arm chair strategist evaluation. These so called "experts" want to tell the Contras how to win. They would have them hold territory, without any air support, and let them be chewed to pieces by the 47 HIP and HIND helicopters.

Why would that happen? The Soviet flown twin-engined reconnaissance aircraft provides the necessary intelligence information as to guerrilla force activity. Four major radar sites give guidance to Cuban and Nicaraguan helicopter pilots to precise locations identified by the Soviet reconnaissance flights. Then the destruction to the Contra forces begins with only a few surface-to-air missiles for their defense. Yes, it would be patently absured for the democratic guerrilla forces to seize and hold territory before achieving more important victories against Sandinista military forces. Whether the Soviets participated or not, the speed of the helicopters and their ability to be responsive to forces under attack, makes holding fixed positions absurd.

Another frequent criticism of the United Nicaraguan Opposition is their supposed ties to Somoza and the National Guard. Thousands of the Guard are imprisoned by the communists for no other reason that they were in the army. Others fled Nicaragua as the Sandinistas came to power. First, Anastasio Somoza, as an authoritarian leader, never promulgated a Somoza ideology. Somoza, living in exile in Paraguay, was sought out and assassinated by the Sandinistas. Detractors of the Contras say their military leader was a member of the National Guard. But even the Sandinistas state he was not involved in Nicaragua during the war while stationed in Washington. Significantly, the Carter administration attempted to preserve the National Guard during the transition, under the leadership of Enrique Bermudez, the present military commander of the Contras.

Despite an analysis of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN) leadership showing only 15% being former National Guard Officers, myths persist that the Contras are completely managed by them. This double standard is strange as the evidence is clear showing the presence of so many international communists playing leading roles in Nicaragua today in security, the Ministry of Interior, propaganda and the military. Even more strange is the suggestion that all former National Guard officers were some sort of SS troops. This is preposterous. One should recall that several years following World War II the allied forces decided the Germans needed an army to assist in the defense of NATO. Officers, including generals, who had fought in the German army under Adolf Hitler, were called upon to rebuild the new German army. This of course was possible because of allied intelligence and good biographic knowledge of the roles these officers had played under Hitler's command. Why are we writing off all National Guard officers?

Then the question is raised that after all these years there appears to be no support for the democratic resistance forces within Nicaragua. Does any one really expect to see a popular uprising such as in Budapest, Hungary in 1956? Totalitarian regimes are highly capable of ruthlessly putting down such obvious efforts of people attempting to achieve freedom. That is why so many new prisons have been built and filled in Nicaragua. Do not these same doubters of internal Contra support wonder why the resistance forces almost doubled during the period the United States was only providing them humanitarian assistance?

When the Contras achieve greater success in combat, when international political support builds for them, rather than seeing popular uprisings, one will first see wide spread defections from the Sandinistas. Demonstrations against the unpopular Sandinista government are more frequent now and the Catholic church will provide the opportunity for more. The ability of the Nicaraguans to shift their loyalties will come readily given an opportunity. Dissent grows daily within Nicaragua.

Of course what the democratic resistance forces need is a commitment from the United States to support them until Nicaragua becomes democratic. Internal support for the Contras depends on perceptions of United States commitment to the democratization of Nicaragua. That is very much in doubt today because of current efforts by a minority within the Congress, to cut off aid.

THE CONTADORA PROCESS.

There are some who would put their reliance in the Contadora process. In fact the Contadora process has given the communist comandantes four years to consolidate their power. Peace discussions and false treaties without verification capabilities are only scraps of paper. The Sandinistas have never lived up to their promises made to the Organization of American States in 1979, why would they change now? If we and our Rio Treaty allies are unable to live up to our commitments signed in 1947 and then constantly updated with international protocols, what future promises are we capable of meeting? Why are there double standards with respect to treaties? Why would a Congress uphold the NATO Treaty, the unratified SALT II, the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty, the Panama Canal treaties and then toss the Rio treaty on the ash heap?

The Contadora nations are Venezuela, Colombia, Panama and Mexico. Venezuela, Panama and Mexico had major roles in bringing the Sandinistas to power. Are they continuing to honor that earlier commitment? Colombia is battling communist guerrilla forces internally; one force, the M-19 have been supported by the Sandinistas themselves. Is Colombia's role one of response to intimidation? Panama's strong man recently declined to either identify himself as being anti-communist or being critical of Fidel Castro. We would trust him to negotiate a treaty with the Nicaraguans providing for our security?

Is it not strange that a recent Venezuelan president stated that Latin Americans should resolve the Central American crisis? Why Latin Americans, when a major player on the scene is the Soviet Union? Why Latin Americans when we are all members of the Inter-American system? Why Latin Americans when we are Rio Treaty members and the treaty provides for response to aggression, not only from offensive conventional forces, but from acts of subversion and terrorism. Venezuela, incidentally, is farther from Nicaragua than is the United States.

If Central American nations were the major negotiators with the Nicaraguans that might be understandable, but why these other Latin American nations besides the original Contadora group, to include, Argentina, Peru, Brazil and Uruguay? How is it possible to have treaty discussions without the United States when the issue is a crisis of the region and we are part of that region? How is it possible that a major combatant force, the FDN, under UNO leadership, is not a participant in those peace discussions?

And why is it within Central America that international discussions and meetings take place involving political parties, private groups, and ex-government officials, who are totally opposed to the Contadora process, are never reported by our national media?

AND THEN THE POLLS.

Opinion polls are supposed to show the public fails to support President Ronald Reagan's policies in Central America. They invariably show support for him but confusion over objectives in Central America. Obviously key to public support is knowledge. Since 1981 I have attended numerous congressional hearings where administration officials clearly outlined President Reagan's policies and the threat imposed by a communist Nicaragua. Rarely was there any coverage given in the press or on the nightly television news.

Defense and State publications are well developed, informative and identify the reasons why the United States supports the democratic resistance and what a communist Nicaragua poses to the peace and stability of the Central American region. Distribution is limited to those requesting information and libraries throughout the country. Last Friday I attended a Central American briefing given at the White House where the President's National Security Council advisor, and the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, briefed private organizational leadership. Press and television cameras were much in evidence. Newspapers such as the New York Times and the Washington Post gave scant coverage. In fact, important comments were made by administration spokesmen, which though did not change the President's policies identified concerns over the Contadora process not previously covered.

Most Americans depend primarily upon television and daily newspapers for their knowledge of current events. Press failures to adequately cover administration Central American policies forces the President to be the principle enunciator of policy because of his ability to command network and newspaper coverage.

Polls rarely ask stark questions? e.g. Would you approve of the Soviet Union building military bases in Nicaragua? Would you approve of the Soviet Union having the dominant influence in the region between Panama and Mexico?

SUMMARY.

A cutoff of aid to the FDN would presage a decline of United States influence world-wide. It would be a watershed decision of immediate signficance in the Central American region. Central American nations would immediately require increased military and economic assistance to counter communist Sandinista aggression. Military, security and intelligence forces would need to be augmented, a price no Central American country is capable of doing, all facing major economic problems.

Communist guerrilla forces in El Salvador would be emboldened receiving increased assistance from Cuba and Nicaragua.

There would be a marked increase in capital flight from Central America with decreased foreign investment from abroad.

There would be a sharp increase in the departure of the professional classes throughout Central America.

The most enterprising of the lower classes, those expected to create the stable development of the middle class, would exit as well.

The democractic resistance forces would be resettled in the United States with their families. (Other nations would not accept them without massive economic support being provided by the United States.)

Many other groups would entertain the expectation that they too should be resettled in the United States; those thousands of Nicaraguans now living in Honduras and Costa Rica.

This would be the beginning of a new exodus of the "feet" people to the United States through illegal immigration.

Other Western Hemisphere nations not now believing they are directly threatened by the communist Nicaraguans would reevaluate their positions.

One could expect a rather rapid adjustment leftwards in the political leadership of Western Hemispheric nations as they reevaluated Soviet influence in the region.

The Organization of the American States would be dismantled and a new organization created without United States participation. (The Latin American group.)

The United States would lose credibility as a staunch ally with other treaty organizations.

Nicaragua would rapidly transform itself into another Libya, exporting subversion and terrorism.

Nicaraguan youth would become the new pawns of the Soviet Union providing additional military and security forces for Soviet efforts overseas, similar to the role Cuba is now playing in Africa and Latin America.

And a concluding comment on human rights. Recent congressional actions profess great concern for the rights of black South Africans, the fair treatment of Filipinos, the rights of Chileans and Paraguayans. There is great elation over the release of famous Soviet dissidents, while major efforts are made to release poets, scientists and authors from communist states. But there is something wrong here. The message about Nicaragua has been unmistakeable over the past few years. The Nicaraguan people, a Christian people, have been subjected to the worst kinds of deprivations and indecencies. Why are there some within Congress who are content to forget the human rights of hundreds of thousands of people? American leadership contributed to the errors which were made, which resulted in a communist state. The United States must bear the blame, with other Organization of American States members, for legitimizing the nine communist comandantes' takeover.of Nicaragua. And the United States role was crucial to the Sandinistas success.

PREPARED STATEMENTS OF SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

Wednesday, January 28, 1987

It is significant that the Foreign Relations Committee is holding these two days of hearings on U.S. Policy Toward Nicaragua and the Contras as one of its first items of business this early in the session. It underlines the importance that this Committee and the Congress give to the issue as well as the importance given to it by the American people.

I have long opposed the Administration's policy on Nicaragua and support for the Contras on legal, moral, and practical grounds. The military strategy is ill-conceived, ill-advised, and headed for disastrous results which I fear could lead to a deepening U.S. military involvement. It is imperative that we redirect our policy toward exploring every political and diplomatic path available.

That this task is extremely difficult was underscored last week by the generally negative reception with which key governments in Central America greeted the latest diplomatic effort undertaken by the Contadora nations and the Support Group at the initiative of the Secretaries General of the UN and the OAS. Nonetheless, we must not give up on the effort to reach a diplomatic and political solution. I salute UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and OAS Secretary General Baena Soares for attempting to rejuvenate the Contadora peace process and urge them not to be deterred from this noble task.

In this search for peace as an alternative to the present military approach, I commend Senators Dodd and Weiker for their proposal embodied in S. 184. I look forward to hearing from them as they elaborate on their bill. I want to extend a warm welcome to Ambassador Sol Linowitz, who brings a wide experience and expertise in diplomacy to this issue as Chairman of the Inter-American Dialogue. The panel to follow will be comprised of Dr. Kenneth Sharpe, Associate Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore College and Colonel Sam Dickens of the America Security Council Foundation, both of whom have concentrated on the subject of U.S. policy in Nicaragua. Finally, we will hear from General Robert Schweitzer, former Chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board.

In these days of hearings, I particularly want to explore with our distinguished witnesses the means by which the Nicaraguans can be convinced to open up the political system to a truly democratic process. In addition, I would like to have some discussion on the Nicaraguan government's willingness to enter into an agreement with the United States which would satisfy U.S. security concerns in the area -- a proposition which, at face value, seems very reasonable to me. We look forward to exploring these and other facets of the Nicaraguan issue with the Administration witnesses at the next hearing.

Thursday, February 5, 1987

I want to welcome Assistant Secretary Abrams and Ambassador Habib, who are here this morning for the second day of the Foreign Relations Committee's consideration of U.S. policy toward Nicaragua. This hearing, as one of the first items of business in the session, underlines the importance this Committee and the Congress attach to this issue.

Mr. Abrams and Ambassador Habib are well aware of my opposition to the Administration's policy on Nicaragua, including its support for the Contras. In my judgment, the military strategy represented by the Contras is headed for disastrous results which offer the stark prospect of deepening U.S. military involvement. Meanwhile, the Contra military leadership, still heavily influenced by Somocista elements, is still not willing to allow democratic civilian supremacy. And according to recent reports from Amnesty International and other respected organizations, serious human rights abuses continue. Moreover, despite the Administration's efforts to forge Contra unity under UNO, it remains in a state of disarray, a fact dramatically underscored by the unconcealed disaffection of the respected Arturo Cruz.

We need an alternative to this policy. We need a policy that has peace as its fundamental aim. We need to redirect our policy toward exploring every political and diplomatic path available, which I frankly I do not believe the Administration has done. While I respect Ambassador Habib and support his diplomatic efforts, I simply do not believe he enjoys the full support of the entire Administration. With such support, I believe that a satisfactory Contadora treaty would have been forged and signed long ago.

Last Wednesday, we heard from Senators Dodd and Weicker, who presented S. 184, an interesting alternative that would refocus United States policy toward a diplomatic and political solution. Subsequently, Ambassador Sol Linowitz and other witnesses offered views on that proposal as well as on current policy. Today we have the opportunity to hear from two of the key players involved in that policy.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.

-- SINCE 1981, THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS SOUGHT TO CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA. IT IS NOW FEBRUARY OF 1987 -- SIX YEARS HAVE PASSED -- AND THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA HAS DETERIORATED SIGNIFICANTLY. WHILE THERE ARE NEW DEMOCRACIES IN PLACE, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS HEARTENING TO ALL OF US, THERE IS ALSO A TERRIBLE SENSE OF FOREBODING -- ALMOST PARALYSIS --

WHICH GRIPS THE REGION. THIS FEAR IS BASED ON THE PROSPECT OF WAR WHICH OUR POLICY HAS FUELED.

-- LATE LAST SUMMER, AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT AND THAT OF A NUMBER OF MY COLLEAGUES, CONGRESS OPENED THE FLOODGATES OF AID TO THE CONTRAS. $100 MILLION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS APPROVED, AND NO LIMITATIONS WERE IMPOSED ON THE EXPENDITURE OF CIA CONTINGENCY FUNDS IN SUPPORT OF THAT EFFORT (ESTIMATES OF THE CIA CONTRIBUTION WERE PUT AT $400 MILLION). IN ALL, A HALF A BILLION DOLLARS WAS SCHEDULED TO BE SPENT ON WHAT IN MY VIEW IS A MILITARY STRATEGY WITH LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS.

-- THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY CONTINUES TO BE BASED ON THREE INTERCONNECTED MYTHS.

-- THE FIRST IS THAT THE SANDINISTAS CAN BE PRESSURED INTO NEGOTIATION WITH THE CONTRAS THROUGH U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE CONTRAS. BUT WHAT TOTALITARIAN REGIME IN HISTORY HAS BEEN KNOWN TO NEGOTIATE ITS OWN DEMISE? SHORT OF TOTAL CONTRA VICTORY -- WHICH EXPERTS SUCH AS THE FORMER COMMANDER OF AMERICAN FORCES FOR ALL OF LATIN AMERICA, GENERAL PAUL GORMAN, VIEW AS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY -- THERE IS NO CHANCE THE SANDINISTAS WILL DO ANY SUCH THING. SO THE FIRST PREMISE OF THE POLICY IS A TOTAL CHARADE.

-- THE SECOND IS BASED ON AN EVEN MORE ABSURD LOGIC. IN ITS MOST RECENT REPORT TO THE SENATE ON THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA, THE ADMINISTRATION ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE REPRESSION INSIDE NICARAGUA HAS NOT BEEN LIFTED; INDEED IT CONTINUES TO WORSEN. ACCORDING TO THE ARCHITECTS OF CONTRA AID, THE LONG-TERM OUTCOME OF SUCH REPRESSION WILL BE A POSITIVE ONE FOR U.S. INTERESTS, BECAUSE EVENTUALLY THE SITUATION WILL GET SO BAD THAT THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE WILL RISE UP IN DESPERATION AGAINST THIS DICTATORSHIP AS THEY DID AGAINST SOMOZA. BUT THE

GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL IS SO TOTAL, SO PERVASIVE, THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR POLITICAL GROUPS TO ORGANIZE SUCH AN UPRISING. THE SANDINISTAS HAVE DEVELOPED A STATE SECURITY APPARATUS UNPARALLED IN NICARAGUAN HISTORY.

-- AND THIS LEADS ME TO THE THIRD MYTH -- THE MYTH THAT THE CONTRAS ARE A LEGITIMATE, CREDIBLE, DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION FORCE. JUST THIS MORNING THE WASHINGTON POST REPORTED DIVISIONS AMONG THE LEADERSHIP OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE AS A RESULT OF WHICH THE ONLY TRUE MODERATING FORCE IN THE MOVEMENT -- ARTURO CRUZ -- INTENDS TO RESIGN. AT ISSUE IS WHAT THE OPPONENTS OF AID HAVE KNOWN ALL ALONG: THAT THERE IS A POWER STRUGGLE INSIDE THE CONTRA MOVEMENT AND THAT THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP -- MANY OF WHOM WERE FORMERLY ALLIED WITH SOMOZA -- CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE ORGANIZATION.

-- IN SUM, THE CONTRA AID POLICY IS BANKRUPT: BANKRUPT MORALLY, BANKRUPT POLITICALLY, AND BANKRUPT MILITARILY. THE STRATEGY WE ARE PURSUING IS AN EMBARRASSMENT FOR THE UNITED STATES AND A DISASTER FOR CENTRAL AMERICA.

-- IN MY QUESTIONS, I INTEND TO PURSUE THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OR NOT THE CONTRAS HAVE MADE ANY REAL PROGRESS ON THE MILITARY FRONT AS A RESULT OF U.S. AID, AND WHAT THE PROSPECTS ARE FOR THE PURSUIT OF A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION TO PREVENT THE FURTHER MILITARIZATION OF THE CRISIS IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SOL M. LINOWITZ

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

I am pleased to be here in response to your invitation to testify on the challenging and troubling problem of Nicaragua.

I have for many years been involved in U.S.-Latin American relations in both official and unofficial capacities. Twenty years ago, as the United States Ambassador to the Organization of American States under President Lyndon Johnson, I had the responsibility for organizing the hemisphere-wide Meeting of Presidents at Punta del Este, Uruguay in April 1967 -- a meeting which held out so much hope and promise for enhanced cooperation in the Americas.

Just ten years ago, President Carter's first National Security Council meeting produced the decision to negotiate a new treaty with Panama, and I was privileged to join the late Ellsworth Bunker in bringing these new treaties into being.

In both of those capacities, I worked closely with this Committee and came to understand very well the vital role the Committee can play in providing perspective and wisdom on key foreign policy issues. I also learned how much can be gained by working closely with our Latin American friends and neighbors to solve inter-American problems together rather than trying to go it alone.

During the past five years, I have been serving as Co-Chairman -- together with President Galo Plaza of Ecuador -- of the Inter-American Dialogue. The Dialogue is a non-governmental group of approximately sixty concerned leaders from throughout the hemisphere who come together periodically to discuss the most significant issues in inter-American relations. As you might suspect, Nicaragua has been a major focal point of our discussions over the past several years.

Although my testimony today is entirely personal, it will inevitably reflect the results of my conferring with members of the Inter-American Dialogue and with other thoughtful citizens from around the Americas, with whom I have had a chance to discuss the problem of Nicaragua.

If one thing is clear, it is that the United States needs and does not have a sustainable, national policy toward

Nicaragua. We need a policy that commands broad bipartisan backing and that will be supported long enough to have a chance to succeed.

From almost any perspective, Nicaragua today stands as a disappointment of United States policy. Americans generally are concerned that a Marxist government has become entrenched on the mainland of North America. Many are also troubled by apparent U.S. violations of international law in seeking to oust the government of a tiny Central American country. What is unmistakable and deeply disturbing is that U.S. policy toward Nicaragua has divided Congress and the American people more than any other foreign policy issue since the Panama Canal treaty debates. Our policy has, moreover, distracted United States attention from other pressing hemispheric problems, particularly the economic and financial crisis that continues to threaten all Latin Americans; it has rekindled old suspicions about the United States among the nations of the region, and thus, in itself, has become a major obstacle to better U.S.-Latin American relations; it has made our allies in Europe uncomfortable; and it threatens more conflict and possible direct United States military involvement.

Let's start by recognizing some unpleasant facts:

Nicaragua is today being governed by a revolutionary movement, many of whose leaders are Marxist-Leninist. The Sandinista regime is hostile to the United States and has forged close ties to the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Sandinistas have encouraged revolutionary change and supported insurgent movements in Central America. The Sandinistas are not democrats; they have restricted civil liberties and violated human rights. Their prime commitment is to revolution and not to democratic pluralism.

These facts about Nicaragua must be faced. But so must another hard fact: The policy the United States has been pursuing is not effectively meeting the challenges posed by Nicaragua. Nicaragua in 1987 is surely not more democratic, conciliatory, respectful of its neighbors, or independent of the Soviet bloc than it was when the Administration's policy was adopted; as a matter of fact, it is much less so. The approach we have taken to Nicaragua commands very little support either in Latin America or elsewhere in the world. And by its own admission, the Administration's policy of supporting the contras has resulted in a greater build-up of Sandinista strength and military force.

It is time -- long past time -- to ask ourselves frankly where we are going in Nicaragua and what we are seeking to achieve.

Despite the emotional and divisive debate, there is, I believe, broad agreement in the country on what the central goals of United States policy toward Nicaragua should be: To assure that Nicaragua is not a threat to our national security or to the security of its neighbors; that Nicaragua not be allowed to establish a Soviet or Cuban strategic base or to introduce Soviet or Cuban forces on its territory; that Nicaragua not promote guerrilla activity in Central America; and that democracy and human rights be supported in Nicaragua.

The debate on United States policy toward Nicaragua has fundamentally centered on how these objectives are to be achieved. Do they require that the Sandinista government be removed from power -- or can they be achieved through a negotiated settlement with the Sandinistas? Must the United States rid itself of the Nicaraguan regime -- or is it sufficient that we be credibly and verifiably assured that Nicaragua will not provide military advantages to the Soviet

Union or Cuba, will not try to overthrow other regional governments, and will not seek to export its revolution?

The Administration's policy assumes that our objectives can be achieved only by overthrow of the Sandinista government or by their surrender of power. With these goals in mind, it has embarked on a policy of support for the contras, hoping that the contras will either be able to topple the Sandinista regime or will so weaken it as to cause it to give up its power at the negotiating table.

One important fact which the Administration does not seem willing to face is now all too clear: There is very little possibility that the contras will be able to defeat the Sandinistas militarily. If that is the case and if we remain committed to our position -- this will ultimately mean a large and costly U.S. military operation. Aside from its cost in human and material terms, such a move by the United States would grievously damage our relations with Latin America and imperil any hope of rebuilding a genuinely cooperative inter-American system. Moreover, opinion polls indicate that a military operation in Nicaragua would be nearly as unpopular in this country as in Latin America. It would certainly widen the rifts within the Congress and the country.

An argument advanced by the Administration is that without United States military and economic pressures, the Sandinistas would have no real incentive to enter into negotiations. What troubles me and many others about this approach, however, is that such pressures -- even if they once served a purpose -- have now outlived their usefulness. Continuing them is far more likely to stiffen rather than weaken the resistance to the Sandinistas, to increase the influence of the hardest liners among them, and to push Nicaragua even closer to the Soviet Union and Cuba. By maintaining this approach, we are ignoring the advice and cooperative efforts of the Contadora countries and their supporters.

Moreover, while we talk about using military pressure to induce flexibility and compromise by the Sandinistas in negotiations, in practice we have not connected our support for the contras to any strategy for negotiation. We have been pursuing a primarily military approach to what is essentially a political problem without enough force to win a military victory or enough strategy to develop a political solution.

Is there an alternative which will achieve our central goals and permit the United States to accomplish what President Reagan has repeatedly said we seek -- "a political, not a military, solution?"

I believe that a political solution is feasible and can become the basis for an effective and sustainable national policy with bipartisan agreement.

In the first place, we can all agree that our most urgent and vital objective is to assure that Nicaragua does not pose a direct military threat to our security by becoming a platform of Soviet and Cuban power. The Administration would surely have solid bipartisan support for a clear statement -- expressed publicly as well as in diplomatic channels -- that the United States will do whatever is necessary to prevent the establishment of a Soviet or Cuban military base in Nicaragua. We must leave no doubt that we would regard as an intolerable provocation the introduction into Nicaragua of strategic weapons, major offensive weapons systems, or Soviet bloc combat forces -- and that we would use force, if necessary, to prevent such a contingency. The Soviet Union and Cuba recognize our strength and will respect a clear statement of our national resolve on this issue.

Second, to deter the Sandinistas from aggression against their neighbors, the United States should make clear that our troops stand ready to help repel any such attack by Nicaragua. Once again, there should be no ambiguity or uncertainty about our commitment in that regard.

Third, to reduce the Sandinista arms build-up and to prevent cross-border support for insurgent movements, we should work closely with the Contadora nations in their attempts to develop verifiable and enforceable international agreements. The Contadora effort has thus far had disappointing results. But despite delays and problems, it remains the only viable avenue for political settlement. The Contadora draft treaties go a long way toward specifying security arrangements that would contain the Sandinistas. They would reduce the size of their armed forces; limit future arms purchases; remove foreign military advisers; and ban logistic and material support for insurgent movements. These provisions need to be made more precise and technical, and the arrangements for detecting violations need to be fortified -- with active help and support from the United States. As a condition for its backing of the Contadora arrangement, the United States can and should insist that the Contadora nations participate as actively in monitoring and enforcing a treaty as they have in negotiating it. But there will be no significant progress without real United States cooperation.

The Pentagon and others have argued that even if the Contadora agreement were signed, Nicaragua would violate it and this could lead to a wider war. But the agreement would specifically call for necessary surveillance and verification procedures to monitor compliance. And if Nicaragua violated the treaty, the United States could then take steps to deal with the situation -- with likely bipartisan support and far greater backing and understanding from the Latin American countries.

For its part, the United States has not said whether it would accept the Contadora treaty and abide by its terms if Nicaragua signs and honors it. Clearly, the Contadora process cannot succeed if Washington insists on basic changes in the Sandinista regime as a condition for agreement on security matters.

In April of last year, Ambassador Philip Habib wrote to Congressman Jim Slattery indicating that United States support for irregular and insurrectional forces would cease from the date of signature of an acceptable security arrangement with Nicaragua. This statement -- welcomed by the Contadora nations and elsewhere in Latin America -- was promptly disavowed by the Administration. It remains an approach which could have a significant effect in furthering the possibility of an agreement and reinvigorating the Contadora process.

There is no question but that our other important objective toward Nicaragua must be the promotion of democracy and human rights. But efforts to achieve a workable regional security arrangement should not be held hostage to the accomplishment of internal political reforms in Nicaragua.

The question is not whether to promote democracy in Nicaragua but how to do it most effectively.

Nicaragua has never been ruled democratically, and it will not become a democracy from one day to the next. Nor can democracy be transplanted to Nicaragua from abroad. Democracy is an internal process that is rooted in each country's history, institutions and values -- and in the balance of its economic and social forces. Democracy has rarely, if ever, been imposed from outside by armed force without extended military occupation.

For democracy to take root in Nicaragua, it is critical that political alternatives to the ruling Sandinista movement be strengthened within the country. The way to such democratic openings could be greatly facilitated if the war were ended and Soviet and Cuban personnel withdrawn pursuant to the Contadora understandings.

How, then, can the prospects for democracy be advanced?

First, the Contadora draft treaties provide formal commitments by Nicaragua and the other Central American nations to hold free, fair, and internationally observed elections; to provide constitutional guarantees for freedom of the press and assembly; and to assure that all constitutional parties will be able to compete for office without intimidation or impediment. These provisions must be strengthened so as leave no question as to commitments undertaken.

Second, the United States should work closely with Latin American and European democracies to mobilize international pressure on the Sandinistas to put their new Constitution into effect, to permit their internal opposition to function more openly, and to reschedule and hold their municipal elections. We should also press for amnesty provisions to allow the Nicaraguans who want to return to participate in their nation's life to do so freely and securely.

Third, we can and should provide support to the Nicaraguan groups that are vital to democratic development -- the church, democratic political parties, trade unions and professional associations. The National Endowment for Democracy and its constituent institutions can help as can private foundations and other organizations in this country, in Latin America, and in Europe.

Finally, the Kissinger Commission recommended a program of economic and other aid to Costa Rica, Honduras, El

Salvador and Guatemala to strengthen their own commitments to democratic politics, economic development and human rights. Senate Bill 184 introduced by Senator Christopher Dodd this month would make available $300 million to those countries to bolster those democracies. Such a move would be an important first step in putting before the people of Nicaragua the examples of vibrant democracies on their borders, and even hold out the possibility of economic assistance to Nicaragua once it is embarked on a democratic course.

Democracy will not come to Nicaragua by treaty, by political formula or by fiat. It will take time and persistent effort to build up pressures for democracy in that country, and the United States must be in the forefront. Toward this objective, it should join its friends and neighbors in Latin America to pursue a common course of action toward our common goal.

As I said at the outset, it is time -- high time -- to develop a new policy toward Nicaragua which will have broad bipartisan national support and international respect. Such a policy should not depend primarily on military force that is divorced from any serious negotiating strategy. It should be developed and implemented in cooperation with our Latin American allies and neighbors rather than against their own best judgment. It should, in short, be a policy that will be credible, sustainable, supportable -- and worthy of the greatest democracy on earth.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR LOWELL P. WEICKER, JR.

GOOD MORNING MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE. I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE THIS MORNING AS THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE EXAMINES THE UNITED STATES' POLICY TOWARDS CENTRAL AMERICA. THIS COMMITTEE IN THE PAST HAS LED THE WAY TO BIPARTISAN

CONSENSUS ON VERY DIFFICULT ISSUES AND ONCE AGAIN IT IS PRESENTED WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO BOTH REJECT A FAILED POLICY OF THE PAST AND CHART A BOLD NEW COURSE FOR THE FUTURE.

MANY IN CONGRESS ARE REEVALUATING THEIR POSITION ON SUPPLYING ASSISTANCE TO THE NICARAGUAN CONTRAS AS A RESULT OF THE REVELATIONS OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS OF MONEY DIVERTED TO THE CONTRAS FROM THE IRANIAN ARMS SALES. WHILE MANY ARE POINTING THE FINGER AT THE ADMINISTRATION, I WOULD REMIND MY COLLEAGUES THAT THE SENATE HAS APPROVED THE CONTRA POLICY THREE TIMES IN THE PAST TWO YEARS AND THE HOUSE HAS GIVEN CONSISTENT SUPPORT AS WELL. SO THIS IS NOT JUST A WHITE HOUSE POLICY; IT IS U.S. POLICY. THAT IS WHY I BELIEVE CONGRESS SHOULD SHARE THE BLAME FOR THIS SCANDAL.

BUT WHAT IS THE POLICY WE HAVE ENDORSED? THE UNITED STATES IS NOW TRYING TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA--A GOVERNMENT THAT WE RECOGNIZE. WE LIVE IN A PERIOD OF DAILY HEADLINES ABOUT TERRORISM. WE PERCEIVE TERRORISM AS OCCURRING IN THE MIDDLE EAST OR AFRICA OR EUROPE - NOT HERE AT HOME. LAST YEAR THE ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCED WITH SOME FANFARE THAT THE U.S. WAS CRACKING DOWN ON TERRORISM--MEANING THOSE WHO TERRORIZE THE U.S. AND ITS CITIZENS. THE HYPOCRISY MAY HAVE BEEN LOST ON MANY IN OUR GOVERNMENT AND SOME OF OUR PEOPLE. BUT THE HYPOCRISY THAT COMES WHEN WE PROMOTE TERRORISM IN CENTRAL AMERICA BY WORKING TO OVERTHROW THE NICARAGUAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT LOST ON OTHER GOVERNMENTS OR THE MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD.

SO FAR, I'VE TALKED ABOUT THE NATIONAL DISGRACE OF FUNDING THE CONTRA ARMY. WHAT ABOUT ITS IMPACT ON CENTRAL AMERICA? ARE WE HELPING OUR WESTERN HEMISPHERE NEIGHBORS? THE EFFECT OF THE CURRENT U.S. POLICY IS TO DESTABILIZE THE ECONOMIES OF NOT ONLY NICARAGUA BUT ITS NEIGHBORS AS WELL. WITH

U.S.-BACKED CONFLICT TAKING PLACE, ALL OF THE NATIONS MUST POUR THEIR MONEY INTO ARMS AND SECURITY AND AWAY FROM BUILDING THEIR ECONOMIES AND PROVIDING FOR BASIC NEEDS OF PEOPLE. INSTEAD OF PROMOTING DEMOCRACY, WE ACTUALLY ARE CAUSING POVERTY AND DESPAIR AND THEREFORE PROVIDING FERTILE GROUND FOR COMMUNISM TO GERMINATE AND GROW. I HAVE FOUGHT TO RID OUR NATION OF POVERTY AND DISEASE. I CAN'T BE A PARTY TO CAUSING IT ELSEWHERE AND I DON'T THINK WE REALIZE THE DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES OF OUR ACTIONS.

SENATOR DODD AND I HAVE INTRODUCED A BILL THAT OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE FAILED POLICY OF THE PAST. FIRST, IT WOULD FLATLY BAN FINANCIAL OR OTHER ASSISTANCE TO THE CONTRAS. NO LOOPHOLES, NO EXCEPTIONS, NO CONDITIONS, NO MONEY. INDEED, UNDER THIS LEGISLATION, THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NO LONGER BE ALLOWED TO ENGAGE IN ANY SORT OF INTERNATIONAL PANHANDLING EFFORT ON BEHALF OF THE CONTRA TERRORISTS. THE RECENT EXAMPLES OF THIS SORT OF MUGGING OF THE CONSTITUTION BY CERTAIN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ARE A DISGRACE. THIS IS THE NEGATIVE PART OF A NEW POLICY TOWARDS NICARAGUA.

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, WE WOULD USE THE REMAINING $40 MILLION IN MONEY EARMARKED FOR THE CONTRAS TO FERTILIZE THE FRAGILE SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY. THIS IS A FIRST STEP TOWARD STABILITY. FIRST, THE FUNDS WOULD GO TO SUPPORT THE CONTADORA PEACE PROCESS. WITH THE HALT OF U.S. AID TO THE CONTRAS, THIS EFFORT WOULD BE INFUSED WITH NEW LIFE AND NEW ENTHUSIASM. IT REPRESENTS A REGIONAL EFFORT TO SOLVE PROBLEMS. WHILE ITS PROGRESS HAS APPARENTLY BEEN STALLED, IT STILL REPRESENTS THE BEST HOPE FOR KEEPING THE SUPERPOWERS FROM CONFLICT IN CENTRAL AMERICA. SECOND, THE FUNDS WOULD GO TO SUPPORT TRULY INDIGENOUS DEMOCRATIC EFFORTS IN NICARAGUA SUCH AS POLITICAL PARTIES, LABOR UNIONS AND PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS. THIRD, THE CONTRAS WOULD BE RELOCATED AWAY FROM THE BORDERS.

I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE A FURTHER PROVISION ADDED THAT WOULD GRANT POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE UNITED STATES TO MEMBERS OF THE CONTRA FORCES WHO DESIRE IT. THIS WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT MEMBERS OF THE CONTRA FORCES WOULD PROBABLY BE PERSECUTED IF THEY REMAINED IN OR NEAR NICARAGUA OR ATTEMPTED TO RETURN THERE. I BELIEVE THAT THE U.S. GOT THE CONTRAS INTO THIS MESS AND WE HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION TO NOT LEAVE THEM HANGING.

LASTLY, THIS LEGISLATION REAFFIRMS THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE $300 MILLION IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NICARAGUA'S NEIGHBORS. THESE COUNTRIES HAVE SUFFERED SEVERE ECONOMIC DISLOCATION AS A RESULT OF REGIONAL INSTABILITY.

MR. CHAIRMAN, ONCE AGAIN, I COMMEND THIS COMMITTEE FOR HOLDING EARLY HEARINGS ON CENTRAL AMERICA. CONGRESS NEEDS TO CAREFULLY REEXAMINE ITS SUPPORT OF THE NICARAGUAN CONTRAS AT AN EARLY DATE. I COMMEND SENATOR DODD'S AND MY BILL FOR YOUR FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION. WHATEVER SOLUTION THIS COMMITTEE CONSIDERS IT IS VITAL THAT IT PROVIDES WHAT HAS BEEN MISSING FROM THE U.S. THAT IS, A CONSISTENT POLICY THAT PROMOTES DEMOCRACY AND NOT HYPOCRISY IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

THANK YOU.

Prepared Statement of Kenneth E. Sharpe

It is a pleasure to be here today to testify about a question of utmost national concern: U.S. polilcy toward the contras. I am an associate professor of political science at Swarthmore College, a specialist in Latin America. I have worked in the area since 1970 and have spent over four years doing field research in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. Most recently I co-directed (with Morris Blachman and William LeoGrande) a three year project by a working group of 15 scholars focusing on the impact of U.S. policy in the region. Much of this testimony is drawn from the book which resulted from that project, *Confronting*

Revolution: Security Through Diplomacy in Central America (Pantheon Books, 1986), and if you have no objection I would like the final chapter of that book, "Security Through Diplomacy: A Policy of Principled Realism" inserted in the record.

Senator Christopher Dodd is today introducing legislation recommending Congress cut all aid to the contras. The State Department and the White House, worried that the Iranian arms affair will threaten contra aid, are arguing that the contras should be judged on their own merits -- and not be punished because Administration officials broke the law, circumvented Congress and funneled profits from Iran into contra coffers. What criteria should we use?

Some Troubling Questions

The media today are filled with troubling questions which raise serious doubts about the wisdom of funding this exile army.

One troubling question concerns their effectiveness: can the contras succeed? Analysts are currently arguing about whether or not the contras will make a dramatic move (seize some piece of territory, blow up some vital installation) in order to regain Congressional support. The past record is not good. Despite over five years of U.S. backing (and more than $200 million in covert, private and overt aid), they have been unable to hold any territory, capture a siable town, or operate independently of their base camps in Honduras. Why?

The military effectiveness of the Nicaraguan army, the commitment of local militias and a popular land reform program are part of the answer. But equally important is contra strategy itself. To undermine the Nicaraguan government, the contras attack the very projects and people who are delivering "revolutionary" services to the population: health workers, peasants on cooperatives, construction workers, teachers, and Christian social activists. More US money, arms and training will not reverse this losing battle for the hearts and minds of the populace. The administration has created exactly the kind of movement it wrongly assumes exists in countries like El Salvador: an unpopular external force, organized by a foreign power and dependent for its existence on outside arms flows.

Another troubling question concerns the contras rights record: are they gross and systematic violators of human rights? Respected international human rights organizations like Amnesty International and Americas Watch have repeatedly documented contra kidnappings, indiscriminate attacks on civilians, torture and mutilation of prisoners, and their has been supporting evidence in a number of newspaper accounts. The 1986 Amnesty International Report, for example, concludes that

> Government opposition forces based in Honduras reportedly committed torture and assassinations, and Amnesty cited indications that United States assistance to these forces encouraged or condoned abuses.[1]

The 1986 Americas Watch report concludes:

> The record demonstrates that during the last six months, in the area of Central Zelaya where most contra military activity is now concentrated, they repeatedly sought out those they considered to be Sandinista activists and mutilated and murdered them. The Union Nicaraguense de Oposicion (UNO), the political organization that unites the principal contra forces, proclaimed that it would promote respect for human rights by its own forces, and has established a well-funded and profesionally-staffed human rights organization. There is as yet no sign, however, that these efforts have had any impact on the practices of the contras.[2]

You will recall that the administration has often given assurances that such abuses will be brought under control and that $3 million of the aid Congress approved last year is earmarked to set up a contra human rights monitoring organization. Recent reports suggest, however, that whatever the good intentions of this organization's staff, there will be no way to directly monitor, control, or sanction continued abuses.[3] Administration assurances have so regularly proved empty in the past that it is difficult to take them seriously. Indeed the contra's very tactics make continued abuses likely. As foreign military observors have pointed out, because the contras wish to avoid "combat with tactically superior and more heavily armed Sandinista troops, the rebels have increasingly resorted to hit-and-run attacks on economic targets such as cooperatives"[4] and other non military targets where indiscriminate killing of civilians is likely to be high.

There are many other important and troubling questions beyond effectiveness and human rights -- questions about corruption and drug dealings, for example. I do not have much to add here beyond what has been in the press.[8] Such issues have great bearing on whether the contras deserve support, but the full story is not yet in. The Special Prosecutor and the Congressional committees currently investigating these matters will have more to say.

The Central Issue

The U.S. Senate must seriously consider all these questions: we would be squandering our credibility, our resources, and our moral authority if we were backing the brutal tactics of an exile army that had little chance to win and whose leaders were pocketing our money for private gain while dealing drugs. But in addition to these important questions, we must not lose track of the central issue: is contra aid in the national interest of the United States? In particular, does it promote our interests in peace, development, national security, and democracy? Is there a better alternative?

Let me outline four basic questions that must be asked about contra aid and U.S. national interests and let me suggest a framework for answering them.

1.Does continued aid to the contras support our interest in promoting regional peace? The U.S. has an interest in a peaceful Central America -- one in which the governments there maintain normal relations with one another and with the United States, are not inolved in efforts to subvert one another, and are not involved in a conventional arms race that heightens border tensions and robs previous resources from the tasks of development.

It is difficult to make an argument that the contra effort is promoting our interests in regional peace. The current situation is fraught with danger. The Nicaraguan army's pursuit of contra forces across the Honduran border, Honduran air attacks against Nicaragua, and the use of U.S. troops (twice in 1986) to ferry Hondurans into combat show the shape disaster could take. Top administration officials, still determined to topple the Nicarguan government before President Reagan leaves office, may use such border conflicts as a pretext for full-scale troop invovlement. Regional war, not peace, would be the result.

But even in the highly unlikely case that the contras could replace the current Nicaraguan government in Managua, what then? There is no question that pro-Sandinista forces would regroup in the mountains. They are well trained, well armed, highly committed and will continue to enjoy substantial support among important segments of the population. The most likely outcome would not be peace but a tragic, costly, prolonged civil war.

2.What impact does continued contra aid have on our interest in promoting economic development in the region? Economic development is a goal broadly shared across the political spectrum. The U.S. has an interest in addressing the problems of poverty in the region. The persistence of hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, and disease must be of concern to a country that values human life and dignity. Such problems are also a major source of political instability and of pressure for migration out of the region. How the U.S. can best promote such development is a complex and highly contested question.

But one thing is clear: a pre-condition for development is regional peace. No matter how many millions of dollars the United States pours into the region it will not encourage development as long as the contra war and its threats to regional destabilization continue. Such instability creates disincentives for private investment and incentives for capital flight and speculation. In countries like Honduras, the public resources being diverted to the military are depleting scarce capital needed for development. Further, the economies of the five Central American countries, all members of the Central American Common Market, are so interdependent that the Nicaguan government can not be isolated without undermining the objective of revitalizing this Common Market. To wage war against one economy reduces the growth prospects of the others.*

Such questions of peace and development are often overshadowed by questions of security. Pragmatic policy makers, focusing as they often do on immediate crises, are apt to forget the long term implications of peace and development for encouraging security. "Let's be realistic," they are prone to say. "Our first interest is in protecting our national security -- we can worry about peace and development after this is taken care of." Although such crisis management is often short sighted, there are important security questions which must be squarely confronted.

3.Does continued aid to the contras serve U.S. national security interests? Supporters argue yes, but often in very vague, rhetorical terms. Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams, for example, recently argued that it would be "absolutely crazy" for the United States to abandon the contras, and asked: "are we prepared to accept the Soviet Union as the dominant power in the region between the Panama Canal and Mexico?"[7]

Such rhetoric is obfuscating.

It fails to make the important distinction that most serious students of communist politics learned in the 1960s and 1970s: there is a difference between a Soviet presence or a Soviet connection and Soviet control.

It fails to understand that many third world revolutionary regimes are first and foremost nationalist. The Marxist ideology adopted by their leaders does not automatically make them pawns or proxies of the Soviet Union. The Sandinista leadership has a strong interest in maintaining its political independence from both Moscow and Washington but is anxious to get as much economic assistance from both as it can.

It fails to understand that the Soviets do not have an interest in providing massive aid to the Sandinistas given the incredible economic burden Cuba has proved to be. Gorbachev probably wakes up each morning saying the same thing that Reagan says: we don't want another Cuba. But they would like to stir up trouble for the U.S. and our contra policy provides them with exactly the way to do that at a very low cost.

But once we cut through the rhetoric, there are some hard issues that must be confronted. The United States does have security interests in the region. We have one vital interest: the Soviet Union must not be allowed to place offensive strategic weapons in the region. We have a number of other important security interests: discouraging Nicaragua from attacking its neighbors (or vice versa), and discouraging substantial material assistance to rebel groups in other countries.

Are the contras the right instrument to protect these security interests? Those who would answer yes assume that the current Nicaraguan government must be overthrown in order to ensure that Nicaraguan foreign policy does not threaten our interests.

Let's focus for a moment on our most vital interest: do we have to overthrow the Sandinistas to keep out Soviet missiles? There are three considerations here. First, the Sandinistas have no interest in allowing such offensive weapons: as nationalist revolutionaries, they rightly fear being embroiled in an East-West confrontation. As a signatory to the Treaty of Tlateloco, Nicaragua pledged to keep the region free of nuclear weapons, and in April 1985, reaffirmed its commitment to that treaty.

Second, given capabilities the Soviets have developed with long-range and submarine-launched missles and their earlier experience of badly miscalculating the U.S. response in 1962, they are not likely to try again. The U.S.-Soviet accord that ended the missile crisis has prevented the reintroduction into Cuba of weapons posing a direct nuclear threat to the U.S.

Third, and most important, this is not primarily an issue between the United States and Nicaragua. The United Sates must state plainly and clearly to the Soviets, so there can be no miscalculation, that such an action would be as unacceptable now as it was in 1962. The United States needs to be prepared to respond with overwhelming force to such threats and to make clear that we have the capability and will to do so. But aiding a contra attempt to overthrow the Nicaraguan government to keep out Soviet offensive weapons is as costly as it is unnecessary.

The contra war, however, has already forced Nicaragua to turn to the USSR for weapons to defend itself.* The closer it is tied militarily to the Soviet Union, the greater is risk the Soviets may be tempted to adventurism and that the Nicaraguans might be tempted to go along. Recall that Cuba accepted Soviet missiles in 1962 because it sought a deterrent against a repetition of the Bay of Pigs. If our major concern is Nicaraguan-Soviet military ties, the contra war is counterproductive.

Similar arguments can be made to those who fear that the continued existence of the Nicaraguan government threatens vital sea lanes or the Panama canal. Here again the major threats are from the Soviets whose submarines and submarine launched missiles are already a far more potent threat than the Nicaraguans would ever be. Here again the Nicaraguans have shown no interest in allowing themselves to be used as a Soviet forward base, and in September 1984 agreed to sign a regional treaty ruling out the establishment of such foreign bases. Most importantly it is highly unlikely that any future Nicaraguan government would be prepared to suffer the devastating U.S. retaliation -- in effect commiting political suicide -- in order to give the Soviet Union a marginal and fleeting advantage in a global conventional conflict. The first Nicaraguan attack on U.S. sea lanes would undoubtly be the last. If the probability of its occurence is immeasurably low and its ultimate threat minimal, it makes no sense to anchor U.S. policy on such a far-fetched scheme.

What of the less direct security interests we have in preventing foreign aggression by one country against another in the region and discouraging any country from giving substantial material assistance to insurgent groups that seek to take power by force in other countries?

The contras do not serve to stop Nicaraguan aggression: if anything they serve to trigger border conflicts which could escalate into regional war. Nor does the continued existence of the present Nicaraguan government make such aggression likely. Such agression would involve Nicaragua in a military confrontation with the United States, a confrontation the Sandinistas could have no hope whatever of winning. An attack upon a neighboring country would, under the Rio Treaty, give the United States and the rest of the Inter-American system sufficient reason for intervening. The Nicaraguan government has been fully aware of this. It has carefully avoided letting border incidents flare into a wider conflict, despite the fact that Hounduras shelters a contra exile army of 10-15,000 thousand. Those who point to the Nicaraguan troop build up, the presence of Cuban advisors, and the influx of Soviet weaponry as proof of aggressive intentions fail to understand the primarily defensive character of this build up: it is a response to the very contra attacks supported by those who make this argument. Nevertheless, the arms race triggered by the contra war raises regional tension all around and threatens to make any hostilities much more destructive.

Finally, there is no evidence that contra action has reduced supposed arms flows from Nicaragua to El Salvador (and little evidence that such flows are significant). It appears, now, that the "arms interdiction" arguments made by the CIA in 1981 and 1982 to gain initial support of Congressional Intelligence Committees, was not -- and certainly is not now -- the central goal of the contra effort. Congress would be right to be concerned about such flows if they were significant -- if these were what caused or prolonged insurgency in El Salvador for example. But the contras are not the right instrument to handle such a problem. If the United States had evidence of arms shipments to the guerrillas in El Salvador, it should take that evidence to the OAS as required by the Rio Treaty and seek multilateral sanctions against Nicaragua in order to halt that aid. A unilateral military response, such as the Adminsitation has pursued, is itself a violation of internatinal law and leaves the United States vulnerable to condemnation before such international forums as the World Court.

Moreover, Managua, since 1982, has shown serious interest in negotiating a verifiable agreement to assure that no arms flowed out of Nicaragua through Honduras to El Salvador, nor flowed through Honduran based contras back into Nicaragua.

Indeed the Nicaraguans, following the lead of the Contadora countries, have shown a willngness to negotiate every security concern I have just mentioned. The major obstacle to those negotiations has been the Reagan administration. Why?

For one, the administration argues that the Sandinistas can't be trusted. No one, of couse, signs international agreements simply based on trust. If we trusted our adversaries, they would not be our adversaries and we would not need negotiated agreements on security issues. A treaty is complied with because all parties have an interest in seeing it work, because there are built in means of verifying it, and because signatories judge that they are better off with the agreement than without it -- in other words, there is some incentive to comply. Further, sanctions can be built in for violations. There is no reason why such a treaty can not be worked out with the Nicaraguan government. It should also be noted that if the treaty were worked out in the Contadora context, and if Nicaragua violated an agreement, there would be wide consensus in Latin America and in the United States to apply sanctions, and the U.S. would not face the current domestic divisiveness and international isolation.

The administration's second argument is more fundamental: the agreements proposed by the Contadora countries all accept the continued existence of the current Nicaraguan government. The administration, however, demands that the Sandinistas give up power as part of any negotiated settlement -- this is the so called issue of "democratization." Although the Sandinistas will negotiate all U.S. and regional security concerns, they refuse to negotiate internal political arrangements.

Encouraging democracy is indeed a moral and pragmatic interest the U.S. has in the region. It is moral in that we cannot long maintain a foreign policy rooted in values that are at variance with those upon which we base our own politics. It is pragmatic in that the more regimes respond to the concerns of the majority, the more likely it is that conflict will be resolved in a manner that is orderly, lawful, and widely viewed as legitimate -- and the less likely it is that there will be continual turmoil, violence, revolutions, and regional wars. That said, we must now turn to our fourth and final question.

4.What impact does our support for the contra war have on our interests in encouraging democracy in Nicaragua? I have saved this question for last because I think it is the most sensitive, the most explosive. Any time an analyst shows that U.S. policy is irrational, that we are shooting ourselves in the foot, he or she risks being dismissed out of hand as pro-Sandinista and, by implication, unpatriotic. Even many Democratic opponents of contra aid feel they must introduce every criticism of such aid by first condeming the Nicaraguan government in the harshest terms in order to prove their patriotic bona fides.

If the realilty of Nicaragua is dispassionately and objectively analyzed, one finds that it is far more complex than most politicians in the United States dare to admit. It is far from being a Western style democracy but it is also far from being a totalitarian dungeon. There is much about its political system, its early treatment of the Misquito Indians, its censorship of the press, and its expulsion of clergy that advocates of democracy and human rights should strongly criticize; but one would also want to recognize that the Nicraguan government has rectified some of its past abuses (its treatement of the Misquito Indians, for example, is vastly improved[9]), that it does not use death squads or disapperances to physically eliminate its opposition politicians, clergy, journalists, and peasants (as did Somoza and as do governments we have firmly backed in Guatemala and in El Salvador).

If one wanted a dispassionate analysis of the reality, there are a number of first rate sources.[10] But I want to stress another far more important and very little asked question that I want to urge you to think about. Is continued support for the contra war the best way for the United States to encourage democracy in Nicaragua? There are two simple points to remember as you try to navigate through the rhetorical quicksand.

First, the security threat posed by the contras to the Nicaraguan goverment is encouraging less, not more political freedom. Events of the last five years have shown that as the Sandinistas face increasing military pressure, they grow less tolerant of internal opposition, which tends to be identified, rightly or wrongly, with the armed contras. Those who would ask you to believe that the contra threat has encouraged more openness than would otherwise be case are asking you to believe something that flies in the face of everything we know about how even well developed democracies respond when war is being made against them.

During the Algerian War, the French were involved in massive arrests and torture. The "Diplock"courts used by the British government in Northern Ireland denied political defendents the right to trial by jury. Here in our country, news reports about the Civil War were often censored. The Espionage Acts during the First World

War made it a crime to "promote the cause of [our] enemies" or "obstruct recruiting." And we interned all persons of Japanese origen -- 112,000 - after Pearl Harbor without credible proof that they had committed acts of sabatoge. I offer such comparisons not to "excuse" the Nicaraguans by showing our wrong doings, but to remind ourselves that war is not a great promoter of domestic political freedom and democracy.

The second point. If the current contra threat is failing to promote our interests in democracy, what would happen in the highly unlikely event of the administration's most optimistic scenario: a contra victory. Lets put aside for the moment the evidence that the military leadership of the contras once belonged to Somoza's national guard.[11] Lets suppose that, by some miracle, the more decent, less authoritarian people who are now only political fronts for those who yield real power (respected politicians like Arturo Cruz) took control of a contra run government. What then? Imagine the prior costs of that victory. A country economically devastated by years of civil conflict. Thousands of well armed, well trained Sandinista guerrillas in the hills, undobutedly supported by important sectors of the population, fighting now to oust the contras. It defies imagination to believe that a government led by even the best intentioned politicians could survive without imposing anything less than severe, authoritarian rule.

When analysts demonstrate that the current policy is not helping to broaden democracy or liberty inside of Nicaragua, they are immediately confronted with another question: "what," they are asked, "would you then do to guarantee a Western style democracy in Nicaragua. What is your alternative?" The answer, I'm afraid, is sobering -- especially to "can-do" policy makers. There is nothing we can do guarantee such an outcome. All that can be guaranteed is that the current policy will have the opposite effect, and that an approach which removes the military threat, which uses other instruments of foreign policy (economic assistance, multilateral diplomacy) will be more likely to encourage a broadening of pluralism in Nicaragua.

To summarize. Those who support contra aid with the good and worthy intention of promoting a western style democracy in Nicaragua are promoting a means which will not achieve that end and, arguably, is making things worse. More seriously, the unrealistic though passionate pursuit of this moral mission is undermining the far more vital security interests we have in the region, as well as the interests we have in peace and development.

The Reagan administration usually discounts all the negative consequences of the contra policy -- the arms race, the danger of regional war, the closer military ties it encourages between Nicaragua, Cuba and the Soviet Union, the deterioration of pluralism in Nicaragua -- because it assumes they are all temporary conditions that will last only until the current Nicaraguan government is ousted. But the chances of this happening in the forseeable future are minimal. The administration policy is thus a very high stakes gamble with a low probability of success. If we fail to oust the FSLN, our policy will have made the situation in the region and Nicaragua much worse than they otherwise would be. And even if we succeed, the continued civil war we would leave behind in Nicaragua would not even leave us marginally better off.

What, then, would a more realistic policy look like?

The outlines of a new course are clear and have been embodied in the kind of agreement Mexico, Venezuela, Panama, and Columbia (the Contadora Group) have been urging on us for years.[12] We dismantle the contras, reduce the number of military advisors, and withdraw U.S. troops from Honduras; the Nicaraguans end their military support for the insurgency in El Salvador, reduce the number of their foreign advisors, and guarantee that no Soviet bases or offensive weapons will be stationed on Nicaraguan soil.

Such a negotiated solution can only succeed, however, if it wins the *total* backing of both Washington and Managua.

The Nicaraguans have agreed to engage in serious bilateral negotiations on issues such as the prohibition of foreign bases, cross-border arms flows, and continued militarization, but *only if* ending aid to the contras is part of the deal. The central interest of the Reagan administration, however, is "democratization" which boils down to negotiating the Sandinistas out of power - a demand that makes a mockery of real diplomacy. It will continue to pursue its policy of rollback as long as it has the where withall to keep the contra option alive -- in whatever form.

Thus neither the administration in Washington nor in Managua will pursue a course that truly serves U.S. and Nicaraguan interests as long as contra aid continues. This is why the Contadora countries and the support group (Peru, Argentina, Brazil and Urguay), have, since last February, urged the U.S. to end aid to the contras. Neither they, nor the UN, nor the OAS can broker any agreement as long as contra aid continues. A new, realistic principled policy is within our grasp. But not until Congress cuts off the aid.

Footnotes

1.Cited in Amnesty Action, Winter, 1986, p.6.

2.Americas Watch Report, "Human Rights in Nicaragua 1985-1986," March, 1986,p.1. See also James LeMoyne, "6 Civilians Killed by Mine in Nicaragua," The New York Times, 23 October 1986). The lack of progress by UNO's rights organization was confirmed more recently. See Peter Ford, "Questions about human rights dog contras' image," Christian Science Monitor,23 January 1987.

3.Peter Ford, 23 January 1987.

4.Peter Ford, The Christian Science Monitor, 23 January 1987.

5.Even before the recent mystery about what happened to Iranian arms profits supposedly diverted to the contra war, and the millions the State Department asked the sultan of Brunei to deposit in Lt. Col. Oliver North's secret Swiss Contra aid account, there was reason for concern. In June of 1985 Congress approved $27 million in non-lethal assistance to the contras to be administered by the State Department in a way that would "ensure" it was used only for the "intended purposes." But in its December 1986 report, the GAO said it could not determine how $17 million of the aid had been spent and was unable to account for more than $6 million that had disappeared into bank accounts in Miami and other cities.

6.For a full discussion of such development problems see Richard Newfarmer, "The Economics of Strife," in Morris Blachman, William LeoGrande, and Kenneth Sharpe, Confronting Revolution: Security Through Diplomacy in Central America (New York: Pantheon, 1986).

7.The New York Times, 24 January 1987.

8.Foreign military observors as well as Pentagon studies show that the weaponry is defensive in character. It is also important to keep in mind the relative size of the arms shipments from the Soviet Union compared, say, to those once sent to Cuba. In late October, 1986, the Pentagon reported that so far that year the Soviet Union had sent about 18,8000 metric tons of arms to Nicargua; 1985's deliveries amounted to 13,900; 1984's deliveries to 18,700. (John H. Cushman, Jr., "Nicaragua Said to Get More Gunships",The New York Times, 29 October 1986. By comparison, in 1962, the Soviet Union deliverted 250,000 metric tons of arms to Cuba; in 1963 40,000; in 1964 20,000.(Robert S. Leiken, "Fantasies and Facts: The Soviet Union and Nicaragua," Current History, October, 1984, p.344.

9.See for example Americas Watch, "Human Rights in Nicaragua 1985-1986," March 1986, pp.59-66.

10.See for example America's Watch, "Human Rights in Nicaragua, 1985-1986," March 1986 as well as the forthcoming 1987 America's Watch report on Nicaragua.

11.See for example the 1985 report of the Arms Control and Foreign Policy Caucus cited in the Congressional REcord, House of REpresentatives, 99th Congress, First Session, April 23, 1985, Vol. 131, No.48,

12.There is, it must be recognized, a deep concern about Nicaragua among many of the other Central American nations. They worry about the radicalism of the Sandinista ideology; the traditional tensions among these Central American nations (which began long before the Sandinistas came to power) make them worry about the size of the Nicaraguan military; Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras worry that the radicalism of the social and economic reforms will spread by dint of example if not with active FSLN help. But we must also recall that these countries are especially sensitive to U.S. policy and there is evidence that the Reagan administration has been using its influence to press these countries on the issue of Nicaragua. Lewis A. Tambs pushed Costa Rica to allow contra military camps to the point where he could no longer act effectively as ambassador. Last March, the U.S. had to pressure the Hondurans to send troops to the border to confront Nicaraguan troops attacking contra sanctuaries. According to John Ferch, the Ambassador to Honduras who was fired for uncertain reasons, the Administration lied about an emergency aid request it received from Honduras. (The New York Times, 25 January 1987). NSC documents revealed by the Washington Post (6 November 1984) showed a 1984 U.S. effort to get Central American counries to block a Contadora agreement. All these other Central American nations rely on U.S. economic aid to face serious current economic problems and are thus subject to great U.S. influence. Given this context what is most impressive is the independence some of these countries have shown. Costa Rica's new President Oscar Arias has opposed contra aid and called on President Reagan to increase economic aid to Central America instead, and refused to allow Costa Rica to be used as a military base camp for the contras (the curent reduced request for ESF aid to Costa Rica for FY 88 may reflect Administration displeasure). Honduras recently requested that the contras move as quickly as possible across the border into Nicaragua. Guatemala opposed the administration last year by seeking to revive regional talks. Despite the fact that these countries often echo Administration concerns about the Contadora process, it is most likely that they would support a Contadora agreement if the United States threw its genuine support behind it too.

[St. Louis Dispatch, Dec. 18, 1986]

SOME DIRTY HANDS AT STATE--Brunei Bombshell Highlights for Congressionally Set Limitations

By Kenneth E. Sharpe

It's a real mistake to blame the Iran-Contra aid debacle on the swashbuckler in the basement of the White House and the admiral that was supposedly on the bridge. A deeper problem was a general perception in the administration that the law and Congress were simply obstructions to get around. Recent revelations like the "Brunei bombshell" show that attitude as pervasive in the State Department as in the White House and the CIA.

State has been getting off easy so far. Secretary of State George Shultz has successfully limited public debate to his opposition to the arms for hostages deal and his ignorance of the diversion of funds to the Contras.

But the Brunei affair reveals a disrespect for Congress and the law at the highest levels of State. At a time when Congress had banned any military assistance to the Contras, the State Department convinced the sultan of oil-rich Brunei to put several million dollars into the secret, Swiss Contra aid account managed by Lt. Col. Oliver L. North. The money was almost certainly spent on military equipment for the Contras. More revelations may come (was State also involved in the secret Saudi contributions?), but the bucks from Brunei are really only the most recent instance of State's murky involvement and disregard for Congress.

For example, there was the case of the missing millions. In June 1985 Congress approved $27 million in non-lethal ("humanitarian") assistance to the Contras to be administered by the State Department in a way that would "ensure" it was used only for the "intended purposes." Newspaper reports of Contra drug dealing, gun running and corruption in early 1986 led to a number of audits by the General Accounting Office. In its December report, the GAO said it could not determine how $17 million of the aid had been spent, and was unable to account for more than $6 million that had disappeared into bank accounts in Miami and other cities. The State Department refused to show the auditors the secret intelligence reports and other classified documents needed to verify how the funds were spent.

Then there were the State Department subsidies for secret arms deliveries (like the Hasenfus flight) to the Contras. State used the humanitarian aid to pay for chartered planes to fly non-lethal aid from Miami to El Salvador. The same planes then flew arms from El Salvador to the Contras. When questioned, Elliott Abrams, assistant secretary of state for Latin America, claimed that was perfectly legal since State did not pay for the last leg.

How much did the top people at the State Department know? In July 1985, when Abrams took the Latin post, the CIA told him that the Contras were drawing on secret overseas bank accounts. Abrams said he was aware in 1985 that the Contras were being resupplied by air and "that someone was giving them military equipment," but he claimed not to know who controlled the accounts or where the money came from. Abrams asserted in November 1986, "We did not know who was providing the funds. There were a thousand rumors. Texas millionaires and so forth, and we didn't know."

Willful ignorance? Perhaps. But when Abrams wanted to know, he certainly knew where to go. When the sultan of Brunei asked where to send his money, Abrams simply asked Col. North for the number of the Swiss bank account.

Even more serious is the emerging evidence that Abrams was not only knowledgeable but actively involved. One key participant in the secret network told *The New York Times* that while North and CIA Director William Casey handled actual operations, Abrams was actually "the general strategist" of the whole private foreign policy. And it was Abrams who reportedly initiated the request for the funds from Brunei — with Shultz's approval.

Did high officials at State break the law? At the very minimum Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., is right to argue that even if they were not clearly breaking the law, "they were doing a lot with a wink and a nod" and that this Brunei affair "sounds like a wink, and a nod, and a clap and a cheer all put together." But even if it is just the spirit of the laws that is broken, the disrespect for Congress and the Constitution is clear. High State Department officials were involved in privately funding foreign policy, circumventing Congress' power of the purse and isolating themselves from the kind of consultation and questioning needed for sound policy and public support. Some even flaunted their disregard for congressional intentions. Abrams told *The Washington Post*: "Some members of Congress accuse us of approving this (private help) with a wink and a nod. A wink and a nod, Hell! We think it has been fine."

We need a new policy. But we are not going to be able to find one unless high officials give up the attitude that they are above the law, and that the Constitution and Congress are obstacles in their path. The people in the administration wedded to this attitude should look for a new job. That is, if they are not indicted.

[The Boston Globe, Sunday, Dec. 14, 1986]

IT'S TIME TO SEVER CONTRA CONNECTION--Aid Cutoff, Talks With Managua More Realistic

By Kenneth E. Sharpe
Special to the Globe

With the Iranian arms deal threatening Washington's support of Nicaragua's contras, US policy in Central America has reached a critical juncture – the Reagan administration can either be drawn deeper into the quagmire or embark on a new, more realistic policy. Given that choice, it would do well to ask itself the following questions: What would happen if the contra movement dies, and what are the US options for dealing with the Sandinistas?

The current situation is fraught with danger. The Nicaraguan army's pursuit of contra forces across the Honduran border, Honduran air attacks against Nicaragua, and the use of US troops (for the second time this year) to ferry Hondurans into combat show the shape disaster could take. Top administration officials, still determined to topple the Nicaraguan government before Reagan leaves office, may use such border conflicts as a pretext for full-scale US troop involvement.

The current crisis, however, also contains a seed of hope. More level-headed policy makers may be spurred to figure out how to safely abort this mission of madness and guide the United States and the region toward a safer course. But they first have to overcome administration resistance.

The State Department argues that the contras should be judged on their own merits – and not be punished because administration officials broke the law, circumvented Congress and funneled profits from Iran into contra coffers. The contras, this argument goes, are an effective foreign-policy tool, and their demise will threaten US and regional security and the chances for democratization in Nicaragua.

How strong is the case for this argument?

Cutting contra aid would indeed weaken their fighting ability. It would also reinforce Honduran opposition to their presence. Worried about the impact of thousands of well-armed but ill-paid troops led by unsavory commanders, Honduran President Jose Azcona Hovo and top military commanders have told the United States they want contras to get over the border into Nicaragua. But the possible aid cutoff is not the real source of contra trouble. Their very dependence on US aid and Honduran protection is a measure of the kind of trouble they have been in for years.

Despite five years of US backing (and more than $200 million in covert, private and overt aid), they have been unable to hold any territory, capture a sizable town or operate independently of their base camps in Honduras. Why? The military effectiveness of the Nicaraguan army, the commitment of local militias and a popular land-reform program are part of the answer. But equally important is contra strategy itself.

To undermine the Nicaraguan government, the contras attack the very projects and people who are delivering "revolutionary" services to the population: health workers, peasants on cooperatives, construction workers, teachers and Christian social activists. Elsewhere, Washington rightly labels such attacks terrorism. More US money, arms and training will not reverse this losing battle for the hearts and minds of the populace. The administration has created exactly the kind of movement it wrongly assumes exists in countries like El Salvador: an unpopular external force, organized by a foreign power and dependent for its existence on outside arms flows.

Have the contras helped promote US security? The United States has legitimate interests in keeping Soviet bases and offensive weapons out of Nicaragua, but the Nicaraguans have never shown any interest in such a Soviet presence. In fact, as early as October 1983, they offered Washington treaty guarantees against these possibilities (the State Department refused to negotiate). Further, if there were an interest, it's not the contra threat that would dissuade; the Nicaraguans and the Soviets both know that the United States would respond with overwhelming force if any such attempt were made.

A disruptive regional force

Have the contras helped promote regional security? Quite the contrary. There is no evidence that contra action has reduced supposed arms flows from Nicaragua to El Salvador (and little evidence such flows are significant). More seriously, the recent flare-up on the Honduran border, triggered by Nicaraguan pursuit of the contras into their Honduran sanctuaries, shows the explosive potential created by the contra presence. Nicaragua's military buildup and acquisition of sophisticated weaponry is a legitimate concern to the region – and to Nicaraguan leaders who would rather be investing in reform. But for years, Pentagon analysts have disputed State Department claims that the buildup indicates an offensive intent or a Soviet beachhead. The militarization is a rational, defensive response to the contra threat itself.

Have the contras helped broaden domestic liberty in Nicaragua? Events of the last five years have shown that as the Sandinistas face increasing military pressure, they grow less tolerant of internal opposition, which tends to be identified, rightly or wrongly, with the armed contras. Ending US-backed military pressure provides no guarantee that the Sandinistas would expand political liberty. But a continuation of it is almost certain to encourage deepening authoritarianism.

On its own merits, then, the contra policy has been costly and counterproductive for US and regional interests. What, then, would a more realistic policy look like?

The outlines of a new course are clear and have been embodied in the kind of agreement Mexico, Venezuela, Panama and Colombia (the Contadora Group) have been urging on us for years: We dismantle the contras, bring home our advisers and withdraw US troops from Honduras; the Nicaraguans end their military support for the insurgency in El Salvador, send home their foreign advisers and guarantee that no Soviet bases or offensive weapons will be stationed on Nicaraguan soil.

Such a negotiated solution can only succeed, however, if it wins the total backing of both the Reagan administration and the Nicaraguans.

Two dangerous administration ideas

The Nicaraguans have agreed to engage in serious bilateral negotiations on issues such as the prohibition of foreign bases in the region, cross-border arms flows and continued militarization, but only if ending aid to the contras is part of the deal. The central interest of the Reagan administration, however, is "democratization," which boils down to negotiating the Sandinistas out of power – a demand that makes a mockery of real diplomacy. The Reagan administration will continue to pursue its policy of rollback as long as it has the wherewithal to keep the contra option alive – in whatever form.

Thus a necessary condition for Washington and Managua to pursue a course that truly serves US and Nicaraguan interests is a congressional cutoff of contra aid. But that won't be a sufficient condition as long as administration officials continue to be wed to two dangerous ideas.

One is moral messianism: They think that the United States has the right and responsibility to bring a different political system to Nicaragua. They are willing to sacrifice peace, development and security in Central America in order to get rid of the Sandinistas; and they are willing to support the cruelty and terror of the contras in the service of this higher calling.

The other is their disregard for law and the Constitution here at home. At the same time that they wrap their unrealistic foreign policy in the cloak of "democratization," they view our constitutional democracy – the law, the Congress and the press – as an obstacle to their goals. This makes impossible any attempt to work with Congress to shape an alternative.

A new, realistic and principled policy is within our grasp. But not until Congress cuts off aid and urges that the people in the administration wed to these ideas look for work elsewhere.

SHOULD THE CONTRAS GET U.S. AID?

By Samuel T. Dickens

SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

The question is, "Do you support aid to the Nicaraguan contras?" My answer is an unequivocal yes. No buts, no maybes.

Critics of aid to the United Nicaraguan Opposition always counter support for these freedom fighters with questions such as "Aren't the contras led by Somocista thugs? Aren't they involved in drug trafficking, rape, murder? How can we support the contras when they aren't any better than the communist Sandinistas?"

It's an old trick.

Use all the propaganda you can muster or, as the communist Sandinistas have done, hire a New York public-relations firm to conduct your campaign. Spend millions of dollars creating a favorable, international image while you progressively tighten control over your own people. Work with sympathetic groups in the United States, some innocent, some not so innocent, some "useful idiots," but work with them. When U.S. congressmen brand you a communist, make sure that the freedom fighters are branded as thugs, rapists and murderers.

In 1981 President Reagan's spokesmen started making daily treks to congressional hearings. They exposed the Sandinistas for hat they are — how they are being used by the Cu ns and Soviets, how they are arming to the teeth, how they have betrayed their own people, promising democracy after the ouster of President Anastasio Somoza, but in reality always intending to make Nicaragua another communist state. Too few people listened.

Our government has published countless pamphlets exposing the communist control over the people of Nicaragua while detailing the threat posed to our hemispheric allies from a Soviet surrogate whose borders are washed by the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Just 275 miles to the southeast of Nicaragua is the strategic Panama Canal.

Thus the real question for the American people is not giving aid to the contras but, should we accept Nicaragua becoming a Soviet base? I have a hunch that most Americans would rightly answer this question with a resounding no.

The Democratic and Republican leadership in Congress also seems to agree. During debates about aid to the freedom fighters, members of both parties said they would never allow Nicaragua to become a Soviet base.

So where is the disagreement in Congress? It is not in the fact that the leadership of Nicaragua is delorable in the treatment of its own people or in the fact that the Sandinista government is totalitarian, undemocratic and communist. The disagreement is what the United States should do about it.

The answer is to support Nicaragua's freedom fighters. That doesn't necessarily mean sending U.S. troops into Nicaragua. It means strong support from all parts of the world for the contra effort.

The president clearly believes that without Nicaraguan rebels threatening the survival of the Sandinista regime, there is no chance for a democratic Nicaragua. History is certainly on Reagan's side. No communist regime has ever given democracy a chance.

Meanwhile, the Democratic congressional leadership has put its faith in negotiations. That is naive.

Peace negotiations are now under the sponsorship of the Contadora group, which includes Mexico, Panama, Venezuela and Colombia. In December representatives of these and other Latin American countries met in Rio de Janeiro with the secretary-general of the United Nations, Javier Perez de Cuellar, and the secretary-general of the Organization of American States (OAS), Joao Beaena Soares of Brazil.

The Contadora effort raises concern that peace desires will overrule common sense and logic, and that Latin American nations again will accept the false promises of dedicated liars. Recall that the OAS conferred its legitimacy on the Sandinistas by helping to remove Somoza on the basis of Sandinista promises. If the Sandinistas had lived up to their promises of respect for human rights, free elections, pluralism and an independent judiciary, there would be no quarrel with them today.

Yet there are those so committed to their hopes for peace that they are again ready to accept a new round of promises that might bring them, similar to Neville Chamberlain's aspirations returning from negotiations with Adolf Hitler, "peace in our time."

That is why it is so important to return to the fundamental issue debated last summer before Congress approved $100 million of military and humanitarian assistance to the contras: Could Nicaragua become a Soviet base, and do we again accept the promises of a communist government that it will not allow itself to become a Soviet base?

There is another dangerous issue to consider as well. Even if Nicaragua does not immediately allow itself to be used as a Soviet military base, it can become a base for spreading revolution, terrorism and drug trafficking to its neighboring countries.

What makes all the current debate on contra aid a mockery is that Nicaragua already is a Soviet base. True, there are only about 150 Soviet military people in Nicaragua, seemingly not enough to allow the Soviets to make Nicaragua a military installation.

But the Soviets learned something about forward basing from us. To cut costs and not to overextend our military forces, the United States has built bases in Western Europe for operation during periods of political tension. The ground forces and air bases are ready for use and materials are in place — including ammunition, bombs, fuel, oil, spare parts and caretaker personnel. Every year the United States stations forces at these bases to show our readiness to friends, allies and potential enemies.

The same is true for Nicaragua. It only takes two things to make operational a facility under Soviet command: a decision by the Soviets and a 45-minute flight of Soviet bombers from Cuba to Nicaraguan bases.

The Democrats in Congress promise the American people that they won't let that happen. Again, this is naive. How is the United States going to stop the Soviets from deploying their forces, and what are we going to do once they are deployed?

Americans and Congress must realize that the Soviets mean business in Nicaragua. They and their surrogates such as Cuba have spent hundreds of millions of dollars developing military facilities in that country.

The communist Nicaraguans started building military facilities and improving their air bases as soon as they came to power in 1979. It wasn't in response to Reagan's election. A military buildup was their intention from the beginning.

One of the five major airfields with concrete runways, Punta Huete, besides being useful for jet fighter operations, has a runway more than 10,000 feet long with concrete more than a yard thick. Thus, it is able to handle the heaviest Soviet bombers. In addition, four modern radar facilities provide coverage over the entire country.

Last year the Soviets and Soviet bloc made 44 ship deliveries to Nicaragua. They delivered 18,800 metric tons of military equipment valued at more than $280 million. Recent helicopter deliveries have given Nicaragua a total helicopter force of 57. Of these, 12 are MI-24/25D HINDs — the deadliest and most heavily armored attack helicopter in the world. The Nicaraguans also have 35 other helicopters that are designed not only to carry military personnel but also can be used as helicopter gunships.

The communist Sandinistas have an active force of 62,000 men under arms, backed up with a 16,000-man mobilized reserve and 33,550 mobilized militiamen. And all this is from a country with a population of just 3.3 million people. Compare that with Nicaragua's neighbors. Costa Rica has a population of 2.7 million, but it has no army and a security force of just 8,000. Honduras has a population of 4.6 million people, but its armed forces number just 15,000. El Salvador, fighting a war against communist-led guerrillas, and with a population of 5.1 million, has an armed force of 50,000.

Add to the Nicaraguan forces thousands of Soviet-bloc advisers as well as North Koreans and members of terrorist groups from Libya, the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Red Brigade. The East Germans run the Nicaraguan security force, the Bulgarians are deep into military training with the Czechoslovakians and thousands of Cubans back up every Nicaraguan decision-maker as advisers.

The Nicaraguan army has more than 150 Soviet tanks, 199 armored vehicles, extensive numbers of field artillery pieces and more than 200 anti-aircraft weapons. The Sandinistas also have more than 300 shoulder-fired, heat-seeking Soviet ground-to-air missiles.

The fundamental question then is, should the United States wait until the Soviets deploy their operational force and then have the first head-to-head confrontation with them since the Cuban missile crisis? Do the Soviets then back down as they did in 1962, but still leaving a communist Cuba? This could be the case in Nicaragua.

It is important to note the changes in Soviet strategic strength between 1962 and 1987. In 1962 U.S. military strength was far superior to the Soviets. We do not enjoy that advantage today. Allowing the Soviets to make Nicaragua a military base is a gamble — and one that we might not win.

The Defense Department has made an analysis titled, *The Threat Posed by Soviet Expansionism*, that states a Soviet presence in Nicaragua "could place hostile forces and weapons systems within striking distance of targets in the United States."

The report goes on to say that a base in Nicaragua could provide air and naval bases for recovering Soviet aircraft after strategic missions, could furnish missile sites for launching attacks against the United States and could allow the Soviet Pacific and Atlantic fleets to operate near our shores without having to return to the Soviet Union for maintenance.

For all these reasons, I favor aid to the rebels fighting Nicaragua's communist government. I support aid to the contras, not just because I know their political and military leadership and respect them, not just because the Sandinistas have oppressed their own people and oppress them as communists oppress their own people everywhere, not just because the contras are the only hope for democracy in Nicaragua. I support aid to the contras ultimately because the contras help us.

All the major countries in the inter-American system are signatories of the Rio Treaty, which predates NATO. The treaty identifies communism as the threat to peace in this hemisphere, not only through overt aggression but through covert and subversive means.

Apparently the nations of this hemisphere are not willing to stand up for these beliefs expressed in this international treaty. With nations so much in disarray internally, with international institutions floundering through division and impotency, the United Nicaraguan Opposition is the best hope for all of us.

Aid to the contras is not just aid for them, it is clearly aid for us. The United Nicaraguan Opposition forces deserve the right to fight for democracy for their own country. If we falter in our support to them, we dash the hopes of all Central Americans who fear a communist Nicaragua.

Failure to aid the contras now leads to a slippery path of foreign-policy failures for us throughout the world. A failure to aid the contras greatly limits our future national security options. If we fail to meet the challenge now, the challenge soon will be to our own future as a major world power.

IF TRUMAN HAD DEALT WITH THE CONTRAS

By Wayne S, Smith

WASHINGTON — Any hope that revelation of its folly in Iran might induce the Administration to abandon its equally ill-conceived policy in Nicaragua has gone quickly aglimmering. Administration officials are again insisting that aiding the contras is our only hope. The President can be expected to join in tonight, in his State of the Union Message, doubtless again describing the contras as the only thing standing between us and the Communist hordes.

Some contra supporters even go so far as to suggest that if Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, and John F. Kennedy were alive, this would be their policy as well. Aiding the contras, their supporters say, is of a piece with the Truman Doctrine.

Bunk. Aiding the contras is a timorous and ineffective policy that has accomplished nothing in more than five years of trying. And it would have been rejected out of hand by Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, and by President Kennedy as well, once he had been burned at the Bay of Pigs.

The United States has legitimate security concerns in Nicaragua. We want all Soviet and Cuban military personnel sent home. We do not want the establishment of Soviet or Cuban military bases, or the introduction of sophisticated weaponry that might threaten nearby sea lanes and the Panama Canal. But present policy comes to grips with none of that. There is a greater Soviet presence in Nicaragua today than before we started the contra war.

Nor does present policy in any way help to preserve political pluralism in Nicaragua. Quite the contrary, the war has brought the further curtailment of democratic processes and a harsher life for most Nicaraguans. The Sandinista Government has just promulgated a new Constitution that provides for civil and political liberties. It immediately curtailed these freedoms but said they would all be restored were it not for the war. Rather than testing Managua's word, we continue the war.

In truth, of course, the Administration's aim is to overthrow the Sandinista Government. But that objective is well beyond its reach. The contras are vastly inferior to the Sandinista Army. They are led by men who once belonged to the National Guard of Anastasio Somoza Debayle and have been considerably tainted by their association with the Central Intelligence Agency. They haven't a chance of gaining popular support in Nicaragua and thus not a chance of winning the war. Meanwhile, legitimate United States security concerns are left unattended.

Roosevelt, Truman and Kennedy would have been appalled by this Administration's conduct. Truman, who had a deep commitment to the rule of law, felt that "secrecy and a free, democratic government don't mix." His doctrine was aimed at containing Communism by aiding recognized governments to defend themselves — and with aid fully approved by Congress. No wimp was Harry, but neither was he a bully. He did not hesitate to go to South Korea's defense in 1950. But it was not he who had the C.I.A. overthrow the Government of Guatemala in 1954. That was President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles.

One can imagine Truman's acerbic reaction to today's policy — a policy that has brought us to illegally mine Nicaraguan harbors, to write assassination manuals to reject the jurisdiction of the World Court. A fine position, he would have said, for a nation supposedly dedicated to strengthening the rule of law.

What would he have done instead? Surely, he would not have left the United States's security interests dangling from some contra's ammo belt; rather, he would have placed them in the strong hands of the United States itself. He would have said to the Sandinistas: "Boys, we may not like or trust one another, but we can get along if you respect my security concerns. Let's sit down and sign a verifiable agreement under which you promise to send all those Soviet and Cuban soldiers home and guarantee not to let them set up any bases. You must also stop importing arms and halt any aid you may be giving to guerrillas in neighboring countries. If you abide by that agreement, we'll get along. Violate it, and the full might of the United States will fall on you."

U.S. DISCUSSED ARMS, CAPTIVES WITH IRAN AGAIN LAST MONTH

By Don Oberdorfer and Walter Pincus

Washington Post Staff Writers

Secretary of State George P. Shultz testified yesterday that, despite his objections, U.S. officials continued to meet secretly with Iranians about arms and hostages as recently as last month, weeks after the Iran-contra scandal had erupted and the State Department supposedly had been put in charge of Iran policy, according to congressional sources.

Shultz told a three-hour, closed-door session of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that he authorized a Dec. 6 meeting in Europe of State Department and CIA officials with Iranian contacts, according to sources familiar with his testimony. But Shultz said he was astonished to learn that the Iranians had arrived with a nine-point "agenda," which included acquisition of American TOW antitank missiles and spare parts for Hawk antiaircraft missiles, the release of 17 Islamic Jihad terrorists held in Kuwait and the release of American hostages held by pro-Iranian extremists in Lebanon.

President Reagan had announced publicly Nov. 19 that no more arms would be furnished to Iran. But at the meeting in Europe, the Iranians insisted that the agenda had been worked out in earlier discussions with National Security Council representatives, according to an account of Shultz's presentation. Shultz added that when he discovered to his dismay that this was true, he immediately ordered that the U.S.-Iranian discussions end.

The secretary told the committee he was furious to discover a few days later that, despite his instructions, CIA officials resumed the discussions with the Iranian contacts. Shultz "raised hell" when he found out, one lawmaker said yesterday.

Prior to Shultz's disclosure yesterday, the last known meeting between Iranian and American officials, including CIA officials and Lt. Col. Oliver L. North of the NSC staff, took place in Geneva Nov. 8-10, in the week after disclosure of the Reagan administration's Iranian initiative by a Lebanese magazine. No details of this meeting have been disclosed.

On Dec. 6, the day that U.S. and Iranian officials were meeting again in Europe, Reagan said in his Saturday radio broadcast that his efforts to forge relationships with "moderates" in Iran had been "broken off" after they were publicized. He added that "it was not my intent to do business with [Ayatollah Ruhollah] Khomeini, to trade weapons for hostages."

Shultz, who has said he opposed trading arms for hostages from the time the issue first arose in 1985, has also adamantly opposed pressuring Kuwait to release the terrorists it is holding for a series of 1983 bombings. The release of these prisoners has been a consistent demand of the Islamic Jihad group holding American hostages in Lebanon.

The State Department has denied repeated rumors from the Middle East that the United States is pressuring Kuwait about the prisoners. A participant at yesterday's hearing said Shultz's testimony seemed to explain why he sent a message to Kuwait's foreign minister later in December reaffirming that the United States is not linking freedom for the terrorists being held there with release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon.

In his testimony, Shultz also provided new details about U.S. efforts to solicit aid from other governments to aid the contras fighting the government of Nicaragua. Previously Shultz had said he was aware of only one such appeal, apparently the previously reported solicitation of money from the sultan of Brunei by a senior State Department official.

Yesterday, however, he testified that he had learned about several others, including a U.S. request for communications equipment for the rebels, according to sources familiar with the testimony. It was unclear which nations were solicited, by whom and why Shultz had not previously disclosed the requests.

Shultz began his testimony by reading for about an hour from a detailed description of his knowledge and actions concerning the Iran policy and the contra connection. The document he read was stamped "top secret" and, contrary to normal practice, no copy was submitted to the committee in advance or made available as he spoke.

Committee members, who were reluctant to discuss details of Shultz's testimony, expressed confidence in the secretary of state; some said his story was more credible to them than accounts they had heard from CIA Director William J. Casey, former national security adviser Robert C. McFarlane and others involved.

"Shultz presented the political equivalent of a legal brief with every date and detail well documented," said Rep. Robert G. Torricelli (D-N.J.). "He did more than separate himself from the administration on Iran—he built a wall."

"There was a very good feeling on both sides that Shultz was very candid and forthright on his role," said Rep. William S. Broomfield (Mich.), the committee's ranking Republican. He added, however, that "the real players are the ones we haven't heard from"—North and Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, a former national security adviser. Both have declined to testify, asserting their Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination.

Committee Chairman Dante B. Fascell (D-Fla.) expressed confidence in Shultz after hearing his statement and called on the administration to provide "more evidence that he has full support and authority to begin to put the pieces back together in terms of foreign policy."

Meanwhile yesterday, acting CIA director Robert Gates said at a closed session of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the analytical side of the intelligence agency was unaware of the White House Iran initiative, according to congressional sources.

Gates said that former deputy CIA director John A. McMahon opposed the sale of arms to Iran at a key NSC meeting in December 1985. McMahon attended the meeting because Casey was out of town.

A month later Casey, who supported the arms program, played a key role in winning approval of a Jan. 17 presidential intelligence "finding" that authorized direct sale of U.S. arms to Iran.

Gates also said that in 1985 and last year agency analysts sent reports to the White House that "downplayed" the chance for any U.S.-Iran rapprochement, even if Khomeini died, according to the sources. It has been previously reported, however, that some elements in the CIA urged as early as spring 1985 that the U.S. government consider easing its worldwide arms embargo against Iran and work toward better relations with Tehran.

Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), chairman of the Senate panel, said after the hearing, "I remain convinced that our national interest would have been better served if we had listened to the advice of professionals." He added he believed CIA officials had advised against the arms sales.

KEY CONTRA LEADER GROWS WEARY OF INTRAMURAL STRUGGLE, MAY QUIT

By James Morrison
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Arturo Cruz, a key civilian leader of Nicaragua's anti-Marxist resistance, is threatening to resign because of a continuing power struggle with the Contras' military leadership.

Mr. Cruz, in a telephone interview from his home in Miami, told The Washington Times yesterday, "I have not resigned ... but that does not mean I will allow myself to become hostage to a situation that I find unbearable."

He declined to comment on widespread rumors that he has already made up his mind to leave his position as one of three leaders of the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), the umbrella group created in 1985 to coordinate civilian and military resistance to the Sandinistas.

Contra sources said, however, that he had already cleaned out his office at UNO's Miami headquarters. They said he told several confidants he has already decided to quit but is holding off on a public announcement because he is "getting heavy pressure" from his Contra supporters and from the State Department, one source said.

Mr. Cruz, who served as Nicaragua's ambassador to the United States before he became disenchanted with the Sandinista regime, has extensive Washington contacts and plays a crucial role in retaining congressional support for U.S. aid to the Contras.

"It would be very, very harmful to the cause" if he leaves, said one source within the Reagan administration.

Mr. Cruz, who was in Washington last week, discussed his plans to resign with Elliott Abrams, assistant secretary of state for Latin America.

One source close to Mr. Cruz said, "He went up to the State Department last week and told them he was going to quit unless Calero left the organization. They told him to hang on and play it cool. They said they would see if something could be worked out."

Mr. Cruz told The Times he has problems with the leadership of the Nicaraguan Democratic Front, the largest Contra army. Its civilian head is Adolfo Calero, another member of the UNO triumvirate.

He said the problems "are directly connected" to a power struggle that threatened to split the organization last summer when disagreements arose between Mr. Calero, on one side, and Mr. Cruz and Alfonso Robelo, the third member of the directorate, on the other.

Some sources said Mr. Cruz is frustrated and exhausted from his attempts to exert some civilian influence in a struggle that is mostly dominated by the military. Mr. Cruz has demanded a role in directing a military operation along Nicaragua's southern border and in deciding how $100 million in U.S. aid will be spent, sources said.

Mr. Cruz, in the interview, said, "It is not physical exhaustion. Maybe it is that I have run out of patience."

Ernesto Palazio, director of UNO's Washington office, said Mr. Cruz "told me he is tired and is thinking of resigning." There are "serious disagreements" between Mr. Cruz and other Contra leaders, he added. Mr. Palazio plans to meet with Mr. Cruz in Miami today.

Although Mr. Cruz has threatened to resign before, Contra sources said the situation that brought him to the verge of quitting began during a December trip to Honduras, the home of a large Nicaraguan exile community and the FDN headquarters.

The trip was apparently made for the purpose of recruiting new members for Mr. Cruz' fledgling political party, Democratic Action (AD).

"When Cruz came back, he said that everyone [among the rebel community in Honduras] had been instructed not to talk with him," one rebel source said. "He said that at one point he felt his life was in danger."

Another rebel source said that the trip was marred by confrontations between Mr. Cruz and members of another rebel political group, the Nicaraguan Democratic Fomentation (FODENIC).

"When he arrived at some of the refugee camps in Honduras, he was met by some people from FODENIC who treated him with a lack of respect," the source said.

Last May, when UNO formed a constituent assembly — composed of delegates from many different Nicaraguan political groups — to direct its political agenda, the FDN was barred from sending representatives on the grounds that it was a military rather than a political organization.

FDN supporters then organized the FODENIC political front to send representatives to the assembly. FODENIC is generally well to the right of most of the rest of UNO, sources said.

"It contains some people who have never really accepted the creation of UNO or the presence of Robelo and Cruz in leadership positions," said a rebel source.

Staff members in UNO's Miami office said Mr. Robelo told them he has no intention of quitting. But one Contra source said Mr. Robelo will also quit if Mr. Cruz resigns.

Calling such an event "disastrous," the source said, "It's already hard enough to get Contra funding passed in the United States. You can just kiss it goodbye if both men resign."

However, another source said that if Mr. Cruz carries out his threat, a significant civilian force would remain in UNO. Many of Mr. Cruz' followers are unhappy with what they see as his weak leadership and believe they have an ally in Mr. Abrams and the State Department.

SHULTZ SAYS U.S. CONTACT WITH IRAN CONTINUED DESPITE HIS ORDERS

By DAVID K. SHIPLER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 21 — Secretary of State George P. Shultz said in a closed hearing of House Foreign Affairs Committee today that as late as last month the United States was still using a secret channel to meet with Iran despite the controversy over the arms sales intended to free American hostages in Lebanon, according to committee members.

The original channel, set up in 1985, was made up of four people, including Lieut. Col. Oliver L. North, then on the National Security Council staff, and a longtime Central Intelligence Agency specialist on Iran, according to a source familiar with Mr. Shultz's testimony today. It was not clear who the two other particopants were.

This source said that after Colonel North was dismissed in November and Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter resigned as the White House national security adviser, the C.I.A. representative kept in contact with the Iranians.

Channel Was Closed in December

Mr. Shultz met with President Reagan in December, and the secret channel was finally closed down, the Secretary said. But getting the channel closed was not easy, and a source familiar with his testimony said he had indicated that it might still be open if William J. Casey, the Director of Central Intelligence, had not been hospitalized with a brain tumor.

According to seperate accounts by two members of the House committee, Mr. Shultz told the panel that after he had learned about the channel, he sent a State Department representative to accompany the C.I.A. official to a meeting last month in Europe with Iranian representatives.

The purpose of the meeting, Mr. Shultz said, was to try to shut down the channel of contacts. In the meeting, the Iranians reportedly said they had a nine-point agenda with the United States that called for arms sales to Iran and the release of Shiite terrorists held in Kuwait. The agenda had reportedly been drawn up by Iran.

In the meeting in Europe, Mr. Shultz testified, the State Department representative learned that in addition to the arms sales to Iran, Admiral Poindexter, while national security adviser, had pressed Kuwait to release 17 Shiite Moslem terrorists imprisoned for attacking Western diplomatic installations.

Mr. Shultz reportedly said that he was infuriated by the continuing Iranian demands for arms and by the suggestion that the United States would countenance violating its own policy by urging Kuwait to release terrorists.

Soon after the discussions in Europe, Mr. Shultz sought a meeting with President Reagan and was at first unable to get an appointment, according to several accounts of his testimony. When he was able to discuss the matter with the President on a Sunday in December, Mr. Reagan reportedly said that he knew nothing about the agenda.

According to some of those present, Mr. Shultz told the committee that he did not know whether the nine-point agenda had been accepted by the White House.

The document, which had gone

through several drafts, is apparently in possession of the National Security Council staff.

Continuing Contacts Revealed

As described by the member, Mr. Shultz's account shed new light on the continuing contacts with Iran and the interest of some Government officials in pursuing a relationship that might involve arms transfers.

The Secretary also reportedly said that the Administration had solicited contributions to the Nicaraguan rebels from four countries. He did not name the countries, but Brunei and Saudi Arabia have been mentioned in the past. A third country was asked to supply communications equipment, Mr. Shultz reportedly disclosed, but it was then learned that the country did not manufacture the equipment needed.

According to a committee member, the meeting with the Iranians in December was intended to pursue diplomatic contacts with Iran.

According to Mr. Shultz, the member said, the State Department had never heard of a nine-point agenda agreed to with Iran. It reportedly included a list of arms to be sold to Iran, including antitank missiles; a repair contract on Hawk antiaircraft missile batteries, and the release of terrorists held in Kuwait. Some Lebanese captors of Americans have previously demanded the terrorists' release.

In exchange, Mr. Shultz is said to have explained, Iran was to insure the release of four American hostages.

When the State Department checked with the White House, Mr. Shultz was quoted as having said, the National Security Council staff confirmed that a nine-point agenda existed. The Secretary was said to have told the committee that he had a copy of the document.

It was not clear whether the White House aides involved had agreed to all of the Iranians' demands. Kuwait has refused to free the terrorists.

Mr. Shultz reportedly told the committee that at the meeting in Europe, a State Department official told the Iranians that the channel was being closed down. An Iranian laughed, and said this was impossible because "we have your hostages."

After the Iranian demands were made at the meeting in Europe, Mr. Shultz ordered the discussions ended and the channel closed down. The State Department people returned here, but C.I.A. officials stayed on and continued talks over his objections, he said.

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21 REASONS TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH THE SANDINISTAS

by Samuel T. Dickens

What advantages accrue from breaking diplomatic relations with the Sandinista government?

Our allies around the world would have a better appreciation for the seriousness of our concerns over another communist regime in the Western Hemisphere.

2. This action would complement the trade embargo which is viewed by many as merely a slapping of the wrist reaction. Other countries, including U.S. allies such as Canada are stepping up economic assistance to Nicaragua.

3. It is a prelude to other actions indicating to the world that a communist Nicaragua is unacceptable to us.

4. It is consistent with actions taken by the Organization of American States in 1964 when all nations except Mexico broke diplomatic relations with Cuba as a result of Cuba's subversive activities in Venezuela.

5. If accomplished in concert with Central American nations, it would reassure the Central American people of our determination to support them against subversion and terrorism exported by the communist Sandinistas.

6. It opens up opportunities of open support for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance forces, by other nations and independent groups.

7. It would end the argument that the United States should not be supporting groups attempting to overthrow a nation which we recognize diplomatically.

8. The entire covert argument and clandestine support through the CIA can be abandoned. CIA can be used for providing intelligence and advice to the resistance forces but the accusation of CIA control and direction could more easily be refuted, as all military aid would be open.

9. It could lead to recognition by the United States and other nations of a new Nicaraguan government. (It does not matter whether that government were in exile or within Nicaragua.)

A new Nicaraguan government would then become a member of the Central American Defense Treaty Organization (CONDECA), giving a military cohesiveness to the political opposition to communist Nicaragua.

11. The communist government of Nicaragua would be expelled from the Inter-American Defense Board, the planning board for hemispheric defense.

12. Serious support and efforts could be made to the new Nicaraguan government by free countries of the world. (They are now deterred from taking this action as U.S. support for the Freedom Fighters is viewed as a clandestine operation in which others should not meddle.)

13. It would enable the U.S. government to curtail if not eliminate the high profile operation of the Sandinistas in this country who are propagandizing university and church groups.

14. It would provide a focus of attention on Nicaragua which the United States government could exploit in better informing the American people of our concerns over another communist nation in the hemisphere.

15. It would tie the rhetoric to the actions. The President is often reminded that his harsh condemnation of the Cubans and communist Nicaraguans does not match his proposed recommendations for action.

16. It is timely to take this action as Congress is responding with positive anti-communist legislative actions. (Aid to Afghanistan and Angolan freedom forces).

17. When diplomatic relations have been severed there exists a host of other sanctions: political, economic, military, which can be taken leading to the downfall of the communist Sandinistas. (Trade, banking, embargoes, blockades, weapons shipment stoppages. The Sandinistas have extensive economic ties with other Central American countries).

18. It sets the stage for positive cooperation between a number of countries who are now vacillating, unsure of U.S. determination to stand beside previous commitments made to ourselves and to the Western Hemisphere. (The Monroe Doctrine and the Rio Treaty).

19. It would have an effect on the Nicaraguan people causing many to make positive decisions supportive to the democratic resistance forces. (The effect would be difficult to measure as it is unlikely there would be massive defections from the Sandinistas until there existed a popular perception of their ultimate defeat).

20. Multilateral rupturing of relations with Nicaragua should result in a unifying effect between those countries taking this action. It would predispose those nations to work more closely in reaching a decision to support the overthrow of the communist Sandinistas. Ecuador has alredy broken relations.

21. Americans supportive of the communist Sandinistas would be unable to travel to Nicaragua. Americans now working for the Sandinista government in Nicaragua would be forced to make critical personal decisions concerning their roles: Continue with the Sandinistas or return home. (This would be similar to the current travel ban on Libya).